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WORDS OF COMFORT
FOR
BEREAVED
PARENTS

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WORDS OF COMFORT.

Opinions of the British Press.

Evangelical Repository. — Never before, at least in this country, has love intertwined so lovely and so sweet a wreath — a true *Immortelle* — to lay on the grave of departed childhood.

Glasgow Herald. — It will help to wipe away those tears which, we suppose, are well-nigh the hottest that gush out even in this sad and sorrowing world.

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United Presbyterian Magazine. — The plan and execution of this little work are alike most admirable. We cannot exaggerate its merits; and rivals, that see it put above and before themselves, will frankly acknowledge that this is just as it ought to be.

Reformed Presbyterian Magazine. — We heartily commend it to the perusal of those from whom God has in His mysterious providence removed "household treasures."

London Quarterly Review, April, 1869. — A most beautiful and blessed book. Here are treasures of consolation, in prose and poetry, for all that are bereaved.

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Pulpit Analyst. — Never, to our knowledge, was the literature of infant salvation so extensively collated, or so wisely and carefully distributed.

WORDS OF COMFORT

FOR

PARENTS BEREAVED OF LITTLE CHILDREN.

EDITED BY

WILLIAM LOGAN,

GLASGOW, SCOTLAND.

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NOTE TO THE AMERICAN EDITION.

THIS volume, of which *fifteen thousand copies* have already been printed in Great Britain, hardly needs commendation to the American reader. But the testimony of two eminent clergymen — one in England and the other in Scotland — may not be out of place.

Dean Alford, in the "Contemporary Review," says: "This charming book . . . originally sprung out of a bereavement, which has indeed brought forth choice fruit. Mr. Logan has brought together an ample collection, from writers, English and foreign, in prose and verse, of passages which could bear on this subject. The large diffusion of the volume is of itself testimony of the truth of our recommendation, when we say that it is one which would form a precious gift to bereaved friends, and would be admitted into counsel with the wounded heart, at a time when almost all words, written and spoken, are worthless. Higher praise could hardly be given."

George Gilfillan, in the "Dundee Advertiser," says: "Cordially do we wish that it may find its way into every room of the vast house of mourning, and do there its benevolent mission as a portion of the grand ministry by which God is yet to 'wipe away tears from all faces.'"

That its lessons, so full of healing balm, so enriched with truth, so clothed in beauty, may relieve, console, and gladden many a stricken heart, is the hope of the American Publishers.

"I AM THE RESURRECTION AND THE LIFE." — John xi. 25.

"IS IT WELL WITH THE CHILD? IT IS WELL." — 2 Kings iv. 26.

"EVEN SO, — IT IS NOT THE WILL OF YOUR FATHER WHICH IS IN HEAVEN, THAT ONE OF THESE LITTLE ONES SHOULD PERISH." — Matt. xviii. 14.

"OF SUCH IS THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN." — Matt. xix. 14.

"I WILL TURN MINE HAND UPON THE LITTLE ONES." — Zech. xiii. 7.

"IT IS SOWN IN WEAKNESS, IT IS RAISED IN POWER." — 1 Cor. xv. 43.

"THE LORD GAVE, AND THE LORD HATH TAKEN AWAY; BLESSED BE THE NAME OF THE LORD." — Job i. 21.

"THEY DIED, FOR ADAM SINNED: THEY LIVE, FOR JESUS DIED." — ROBINSON.

"NOT LOST, BUT GONE BEFORE," the almost Christian sentiment of the great heathen moralist, Seneca. — D. M. MOIR ("Delta").

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BRIEF NOTICE OF A SHORT LIFE.

THE history of the little girl, whose somewhat sudden death was the moving cause of collecting the contents of the following pages, is soon told. SOPHIA, only daughter of William and Janet Logan, was born at Bradford, Yorkshire, June 12th, 1851, and died at Abbotsford Place, Glasgow, May 1st, 1856, at the tender and interesting age of four years and ten months. Towards the close of March, 1856, she accompanied her mother to Keir-mill, Dumfriesshire. About two months previously, Sophia's faithful nurse had been buried in the churchyard there. The child gave her mother no rest till she took her to the beautiful old sequestered burying-ground, on the banks of the Scarr. She soon stood beside, what she affectionately designated, whilst the tears

trickled down her cheeks, "My Mary's grave!" The child was deeply affected, and would allow no one to touch it with a foot, but gently pressed with her little hand the tender grass which covered it. She then went, of her own accord, to a greener spot in the burying-ground, plucked a "forget-me-not," and put it in at the head of what she repeatedly spoke of as "My Mary's grave!"

Early on a Monday morning, which was one of warm sunshine, after wishing "good-bye" to a pious friend on her death-bed, she, in company with her mother and grandfather, walked to Thornhill. Passing along the romantic banks of the Nith, she was greatly delighted with the gambols of a number of lambs, and, with childlike simplicity, entreated "Granpa" to assist her in catching one of them. On returning home, she referred with great glee to this part of the visit; and little did her parents then imagine that in about five short weeks their friends, in consolatory letters, should be referring to herself as a "safely folded lamb"! How impressive and suggestive the words of the Psalmist: "Thy way is in the sea, and Thy path in the great waters, and Thy footsteps are not known." And how soothing to a confiding heart the well-known lines of Cowper!—

"Judge not the Lord by feeble sense,
But trust Him for His grace;
Behind a frowning providence
He hides a smiling face.

His purposes will ripen fast,
Unfolding every hour;
The bud may have a bitter taste,
But sweet will be the flower.

Blind unbelief is sure to err,
And scan His work in vain;
God is His own interpreter,
And He will make it plain."

Sophia was seized with gastric fever, and for three weeks was chiefly confined to bed. On the last Sabbath but one of April, she was able to be out of bed and relish a little food. For a few days she seemed to improve, and on the following Saturday was up during most of the day, and enjoyed herself much. After running nimbly across the room-floor, she said, playfully, to a beloved friend and "mother in Israel," "You see, Grandma, that I can run yet."*

* Both loved ones now sleep together in the same grave, in the Glasgow Necropolis; the one having died in her fifth, the other in her eighty-fourth year. It may interest young readers to know that Sophia's Grandmother had been for about seventy years a humble, sincere follower of Christ, and died in the firm faith and hope of

This was her last little earthly journey. Before retiring to rest, the writer said, "Shall we ask Jesus to take care of us?" To which she promptly replied, "Yes!"—at the same time gently folding her hands. On the Sabbath morning, on being asked to repeat a favorite passage of Scripture, she did so; but, in a lower and peculiar tone of voice, quoted Proverbs viii. 17, "I love them that love me; and those that seek me early shall find me," adding, after a pause, and in a whisper, "*The Lord's my Shepherd!*" On Monday evening it was evident that the solemn messenger, Death, was approaching. In the morning, her father, when alone with her, said, "Will Sophia give her papa a kiss?" She instantly clasped her hands around his neck, and with all the earnestness and pure affection of a loving child, embraced him. The voice of an all-wise, ever-kind Father was heard, at this inexpressibly trying moment, saying, "*Be still*, and know that I am God!" The writer was "dumb, and opened not his mouth," and

---

going to heaven. Her last Bible utterance, suggested by one of her oldest and beloved ministerial friends (the Rev. Dr. Wm. Anderson, Glasgow), was the following: "There remaineth, therefore, a *Rest* to the people of God." May the young, like her, give their hearts lovingly to Jesus!

submissively, though with a soreness of heart which cannot be expressed in words, silently took farewell of Sophia. On leaving the house, for the labors of the day, he said to Him who hears even

"The burthen of a sigh,"

when passing in sadness along the busy street, "The Lord gave, and the Lord *is taking* away; blessed be the name of the Lord!" and mentally repeated the following favorite verses, with a mournful interest never before experienced: —

"Whate'er we fondly call our own
Belongs to heaven's great Lord;
The blessings lent us for a day
Are soon to be restored.

'Tis God that lifts our comforts high,
Or sinks them in the grave;
He gives; and when He takes away,
He takes but what He gave.

Then, ever blessed be His name!
His goodness swell'd our store;
His justice but resumes its own;
'Tis ours still to adore."

In the course of the afternoon, her mother, observing her dear child getting worse, said, "I think Sophia is going to 'Gentle Jesus,'" when she faintly but distinctly responded, "Yes, ma! and you will come too!" This

was the last simple, intelligent sentence she uttered on earth. She lingered on for a short time, becoming gradually weaker, till at five o'clock on Thursday, the 1st of May, a lovely sunny morning, the spirit was wafted by angels to join the white-robed company of youthful immortals "before the throne" in heaven.

The following were Sophia's favorite passages of Scripture: "I love them that love me; and those that seek me early shall find me;" "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me;" "The Lord is my Shepherd."

Her favorite hymns were the following, part of which she often sung in the evening, especially during the closing months of her brief but beautiful life:—

"Gentle Jesus, meek and mild,
Look upon a little child;
Help me, Lord, to come to Thee!
Let Thy blessing rest on me!"

"See the kind Shepherd, Jesus, stands,
With all-engaging charms;
Hark, how He calls the tender lambs,
And folds them in His arms.

'Permit them to approach,' He cries,
Nor scorn their humble name;
For 'twas to bless such souls as these
The Lord of angels came.

The feeblest lamb amidst the flock
Shall be its Shepherd's care:
While folded in the Saviour's arms.
We're safe from every snare."

"There is a happy land,
Far, far away,
Where saints in glory stand,
Bright, bright as day.
Oh how they sweetly sing!
Worthy is our Saviour King,
Loud let His praises ring —
Praise, praise for aye.

Come to this happy land,
Come, come away;
Why will you doubting stand?—
Why still delay?
Oh we shall happy be
When, from sin and sorrow free,
Lord, we shall live with Thee —
Blest, blest for aye.

Bright in that happy land
Beams every eye:
Kept by a Father's hand,
Love cannot die.
On then to glory run;
Be a crown and kingdom won,
And bright above the sun
Reign, reign for aye."

This "Brief Notice" has been retained in the present edition with some hesitation. The writer feels as if it were too sacred for the public eye. It has been preserved chiefly for

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the benefit of those who have been called to mourn over the removal of beloved "little ones;" who will perhaps feel, in perusing the pieces which follow, that they have been collected by one who can enter sympathetically into their deep heart-sorrow.

INFANT SALVATION.

REV. DR. WILLIAM ANDERSON, GLASGOW.

I NOW turn to the consideration of the case of such as die in infancy. These form by far the greatest proportion of Redeemed Spirits. And when the heart of the Christian is ready to fail within him for grief, when among adult men and women he can discover so little which will reward the Redeemer for the travail of His soul, how reviving it is to look upward, and contemplate the innumerable multitude of those who were rescued in infancy from the corrupting power of the world, and safely secured for Himself in His heavenly pavilion! It is astonishing on the one hand, that there should be found so many who have dark misgivings of heart on the subject of the salvation of these infants; and, on the other, that among those who do not question it, so

little account should be taken of them in estimating the glory of the kingdom — despising these little ones, and scarcely reckoning them in the number of the Saved: whereas it would be a less improper way of calculation to say, that the kingdom belongs to children, and that the adults who are saved are a few who are admitted to a share of their inheritance.

Observe, therefore, in the First place, that, with regard to the deceased infant children of believers, *their* salvation, at least, is as sure as the salvation of the parents themselves. What was the promise worth, yea, what did it mean, if it contained nothing for the spirits of his infant offspring, when the Lord said to Abraham, the type of all believing parents, "I will establish my covenant between me and thee, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee," and commanded that they should be circumcised, as well as himself, as a token of their interest in the promised salvation? Are not the blessings of God especially blessings for eternity? "Wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he hath prepared for them a city." And can infants renounce the God of their parents, as those may do who have grown up to years of personal responsibility? Oh, happy children, ye who were laid hold of by the Redeemer and

appropriated to Himself, before ye could apostatize like your wretched brothers and unhappy sisters, who have broken the household covenant and abjured the family's Saviour! Then, said I to the father and mother as they wept, Your children who have died are a better portion to you than those who live: weep for the living and not for the dead: it is the living you have lost; the dead are safely reserved for you. — Again: when believing parents made their way so earnestly through the obstructing disciples, to place their children before the Redeemer that He might bless them, what otherwise was His reception of them worth, yea, what did it mean, when "He was much displeased" with his disciples, "and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God," and then "took them up in His arms, put His hands upon them, and blessed them?" If any of these children had presently died — and there can be little doubt that some of them did die in childhood — how vain it had been for them to be blessed by the Redeemer, if there be no heavenly inheritance for those who die in early years?

It is most injurious, however, to the cause of infants, to plead it on ground so low as this. Instead of merely vindicating their admission,

and some consideration for them, I regard them as being generally the best welcomed spirits which pass into the eternal world. The whole of our Lord's treatment of them is calculated to produce this impression. Besides, contemplating the subject in the light of reason, — Is not the intellectual and moral structure, I ask, of an infant's spirit the same as that of a full-grown man? And who shall dispute, that some of the brightest geniuses and most amiable hearts of our race may have been withdrawn — in the love and valuation of them withdrawn — after a short time's breathing of the pestilential air of this earth, yea, before a breath of it was inhaled, to be secured and nursed in the Paradise of God? As I think of it, I become the more persuaded, that this securing of many of the *best* by early death, may be a principle of the divine administration. It is true, they passed away without having acquired any of this world's learning; but irrespectively of God's standard of measurement being a moral one, how insignificant, I appeal, will not even Newton's science appear in yonder Temple of Light! Will the infant spirit have any sense of inferiority from the want of it? Will it appear disrespectable for the want of it in the estimation of the Eternal One? — It is true, again, that they

passed away without any prayers in which their infant knees had bowed; and without any psalms of praise which their infant lips had sung; but what, brethren, I, a second time, appeal, is the chief characteristic of a religious life in this world? Is it not to have our hearts brought back to their infant state? To have them cleansed of these pollutions, and divested of these perverse habits which we have contracted since we were like these children, who were early withdrawn from the corrupting influences to which we have been exposed? Accordingly, Christ's great lesson for us is, Learn to be like a child. — And, a third time, if there are a few deeds of charity, of the performance of which we can speak for ourselves, oh, is it not all more than counterbalanced when these infants can plead in reply, that they were guilty of no envious thoughts, no bitter or slanderous speeches, no impure imaginations or devices, no fretfulness against the Providence of God, — of nothing at all which can be charged against them as either a dereliction or transgression of duty! Who of us shall presume to compare himself with an infant, or forbid that its spirit go to the Saviour of its pious father, or the Saviour of its pious mother?

In the Second place, with regard to those

children dying in infancy who are the offspring of ungodly parents — equally of such do I believe, that they shall all be saved; though not with a salvation so glorious as that of the offspring of the saints. It is not by any means for the relief of the anxiety of those wicked parents that I express myself thus confidently about the salvation of their children; but for magnifying the grace of God, and rejoicing the hearts of the saints on the subject of the magnificence of the Redeemer's kingdom, and the splendor of His reward. . . . We claim them for the kingdom. When the Son of God was incarnated, He became these infants' Brother; and when *they* have not rejected Him, will *He* disown them?

REV. DR. JAMES MORISON, GLASGOW.

INFINITE wisdom has determined that trouble, of one description or another, shall constitute part of the discipline to which every human being must be subjected. In the present provisional state of things, afflictive dispensations "must needs be."

We do not at present inquire why it is that this element of suffering interpenetrates to so

large an extent the fabric of human society. We take our position upon the undisputed and indisputable fact, that trouble, in one form or another, is universal; and withdrawing our attention from all other developments of this ubiquitous ingredient in human life, we fix it upon one of the most painful forms in which it is found, and over the bier of the departed infant we would ask, "Is it well with the child?"

Tender as are the ties that bind the parental heart to those little undeveloped but ever-developing Living Objects which enable parents to realize that they are parents, these very ties are destined to be often agonizingly ruptured. Comparatively few are the households in which there have not been "mourning and bitterness" for some child that was, and is not. Many are the Rachels who have been bowed down under bereaving affliction, and have wept, and "refused to be comforted," because their sons or their daughters "are not." The "places that once knew" multitudes of dear little Miniatures of fathers and mothers, now "know them no more." And fathers and mothers go about the streets mourning; or, refusing consolation, they languish in retirement.

But is there no balm for the wound of

bereaved parents? Is there no physician to heal their broken spirit? There is a physician, all-skilful to cure. He has a balm which is the very essence and elixir of consolation: "It is well with the child." The child is not lost, but gone before. Its "death is gain." Though it is "absent from the body," it is "present with the lord," which is "far better." It is in "Abraham's bosom." And what is grander still, it is in the bosom of Infinite Love. Its voice to its parents, if that voice could be heard by earthly ears, would be, "Weep not for me." Such is our deliberate opinion concerning departed little ones.

There is a positive foundation on which the doctrine of the everlasting bliss of all who die in infancy may be securely built up.

(1) It may be proved from the fact *that, in consequence of the interposition of the work of Christ, there is to be a universal resurrection of the bodies of men.* It will be admitted that there was no provision made for the resurrection of the bodies of men except in the restorative dispensation of mercy through Christ. As it is "in Adam" that all die, so is it "in Christ" alone that all shall be made alive again. It is the "second Adam" who is the Cause, or Occasion, of the universal resurrection.

But in the resurrection of the body and its reunion to the soul, there will be to the glorified a vast addition to their means of bliss; and there will be to the lost a vast addition to their woe. The bodily organism must, according to the condition in which it is placed, minister largely to the happiness or to the misery of the soul. Can we suppose, then, that any of those who die in infancy, and who have never had the opportunity of rejecting the propitiation of Christ, will be subjected, on account of that gracious work, to greater woes than they would have been called to endure had there been no Saviour at all? Can we suppose that Christ will be an unmitigated and inevitable curse to any of mankind? Surely we cannot cherish such a supposition, when we remember that He came into the world not to condemn it, but to save and to bless it. But if we cannot cherish such a supposition, we cannot suppose that any infants dying in infancy will be lost.

(2) This reasoning is fortified *by the express teaching of our Lord himself.* We learn from the Gospels, as for example from Matt. xix. 13, that on a certain occasion there were brought to Him "little children," that He might put his hands on them and bless them. His disciples rebuked the parents. But Jesus

said, "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, *for of such is the kingdom of heaven.*" This does not seem to mean "for of persons resembling little children is the kingdom of heaven." The term rendered "of such" has naturally a demonstrative import. Our Saviour elsewhere employs it when He says, "The hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth; for the Father seeketh *such* to worship Him;" that is, "seeketh *these* to worship Him." It occurs in many other portions of the New Testament with the same demonstrative import, as for example in Acts xxii. 22, in which passage we learn that the Jews in Jerusalem cried out on a certain occasion, in reference to Paul, "away with *such* a fellow from the earth;" that is, "away with *this* fellow from the earth." Jesus then means "for *of these* is the kingdom of heaven." The kingdom of heaven belongs to "little children." This interpretation is confirmed by the consideration that we should otherwise be at a loss to discover any peculiar propriety in our Saviour's action, when He took up the little ones in His arms and blessed them. If the reason of His procedure resolved itself simply into the fact that *the adult subjects of the kingdom of heaven are childlike*, the same reason

might have led Him to take up lambs in His arms and bless them, inasmuch as the adult subjects of His kingdom are lamblike as well as childlike.

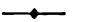
It is true that it is added, in Mark x. 15, that our Saviour said, after blessing the little children, "Verily I say unto you, whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God *as a little child*, he shall not enter therein." But still even here, it is supposed that the kingdom of heaven belongs to little children; for when it is said, "whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God *as a little child*," the meaning surely must be, "as a little child receives it." *Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God without seeking to present any thing of the nature of personal meritoriousness, shall in no wise enter therein.*

If it should be said that "the kingdom of heaven" spoken of by our Lord is the kingdom of heaven upon earth, we would reply, that the kingdom of heaven is not entirely upon earth. It is partly and principally in heaven. And moreover, if there be no obstacles to the infant's admission into the earthly province of the heavenly empire, there can be none to its admission into that larger and more glorious province above, which, from its vastitude and vast pre-eminence, gives the denomination to the whole domain.

(3) We might add to these considerations the fact that *throughout the Scriptures God is frequently represented as cherishing a special regard for little children.* We see this in the rebuke administered to Jonah: "And should I not spare Nineveh, that great city, wherein are more than sixscore thousand persons that cannot discern between their right hand and their left hand." We see it in the words of Jeremiah xix. 4, "They have filled this place with the blood of innocents." And again, in the words of Joel ii. 16, "Gather the people, sanctify the congregation, assemble the elders, *gather the children and those that suck the breast*, etc., then will the Lord be jealous for the land, and pity his people." And in Ezekiel xvi. 21, God calls the little children of the Israelites *His children*, and pours terrible denunciations upon the people for causing them to pass through the fire to Moloch: "Thou hast slain *my children*, and delivered them to cause them to pass through the fire."

On the whole, then, every line of Scripture truth, when we follow it out undeviatingly, leads us up to the conclusion, that "it *is* well" with all the "little children" who have been carried away from the unfolding arms, though not from the infolding hearts and memories, of bereaved parents. They have been taken

up "higher." They have been committed to wiser and more tender keeping. "Their angels" have got them; and in the immediate vicinity of the throne, they are undergoing a training, which is absolutely free from all those elements of imperfection, which might have resulted in moral deviation, defilement, and death, had they remained on the earth. "It *is* well."



REV. GEORGE GILFILLAN, DUNDEE.

"The promise is unto you and to your children."—ACTS ii. 39.

. . . . . .

WE argue the salvation of infants, First,—From the spirit of the Book. Secondly,—From the revealed character of God. Thirdly,—From the glorious sufficiency of the death of Christ. Fourthly,—From the interest Scripture takes in children. Fifthly,—From some remarkable individual promises. And in fine,—From the example and language of the Lord Jesus Christ. And, first, From the spirit of the Bible. What is that spirit? Is it not a gentle, a peaceful, a kind, almost an infantine spirit? The writers of Scripture were simple as children, yet wise as divine inspiration

could make them. And this kindly simplicity they have transferred to their writings. Their wrath, when awakened, burns against obstinate transgressors; not against the infant of days, but against the sinner a hundred years old. And if you would see this spirit in its perfection, read the 12th of Romans, or the 13th of 1st Corinthians—the epistles of John, or the pleadings of the ancient prophets—those eloquent, tender, broken-hearted pleadings with sinners—and ask yourselves, could that spirit have been inspired by a God who would place eternal obstructions between infants and salvation?

We argue it again from the character of God. You need not be told what that is. It is that of a Merciful Being—of a Father—of one whose name is Love—in such a sense, that even His wrath is love—that even His justice is love—that all His perfections crowd in and form that grand central Love which is His essence and all. And when His anger is awakened, against whom does it smoke? Not against children, but against transgressors adult in age, obstinate in rebellion, unwearied in wickedness, who have rejected His terms of salvation, and sinned against great light and many privileges. How irresistibly arises the question, Is it possible that a God who wishes

all to be saved can refuse infants admission into His kingdom?—that He who has no pleasure in the blood of bulls and goats, has pleasure in the perdition of lamblike infants?—none in the death of him that dieth—going down by his own voluntary act into the pit—and yet hath in that of those who have never been offered and never refused salvation? Perish for ever such hard and blasphemous conceptions of God!

But, again, I argue it from the glorious sufficiency of the Death and Atonement of Christ. Sufficient for all, as all now grant that atonement to be, it must be sufficient for infants. It follows, therefore, that infants may be saved—that there is sufficient groundwork laid in Christ for their acceptance. Christ, it is admitted, has died for some infants; but why not for all? and if for all,—since none can by unbelief put themselves beyond the pale of salvation,—why should not all be saved? Supposing a taint of sin somehow connected with the child, has not Christ died to take that taint away? Supposing the dying infant destitute of what is called "original righteousness," has not Christ, by His obedience, wrought out, and brought in a robe so ample as to be able to supply its every deficiency, and to clothe all its nakedness?

But, again, think of the interest the Book of God takes in children. No term occurs more frequently than children. It sparkles like a sunbeam in every page. No promise is uttered but it is immediately extended to children. "How shall I put thee among the children?" is God's great point of inquiry. "Child of God" is His highest title of honor. The Bible may be called "The Child's own Book." It contains, more than any book in the world, matter peculiarly adapted for young minds and young hearts; and its juvenile heroes, Samuel, Abijah, Timothy, and the rest, are among the most interesting of all its characters. How strange all this! did God look upon all infants as possessing no beauty to be desired, and no capacities of moral excellence?

Remember, again, some special promises made to infants in the Word of God. Children, says David, are God's heritage, — His own peculiar and chosen possession. The promise is unto you "and to your children." To your children more fully than to you. It is to you if you accept it; it is to your children, without any exception or reservation whatever. And how often are we told in scripture to imitate children. "In malice be ye children,"—implying that that foul plant of hell, which is

indeed the essence of the devil as love is the essence of God, is not to be found in their breasts. And ye, therefore, "As new-born babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby."

But in fine, all this comes to a bright and glowing point, when we consider the example and the language of Christ Jesus. I cannot resist the idea that our Lord himself had much of the child in His appearance and manner. He was, verily, the "holy child Jesus." He had certainly much of it in His utterances. His language in the Sermon on the Mount resembles that of one who was at once a God and a child, so infinite is the simplicity, and so immense the depth. And why was Christ born a child? Why did He not appear like the first Adam, a full-grown man at once? Might it not be to show that such was His interest in children that He became an infant in their stead, consecrating thus the cradle, and filling the nursery with a divine radiance? You remember, too, how He took a little child and set him in the midst of His disciples, and said, "Except ye be converted, and become as this little child, ye cannot inherit the kingdom of God." And you remember the still more beautiful and significant words, "Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid

them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven." That scene,—was it ever surpassed in pathos and in spiritual meaning? The disciples tried to prevent them coming. I don't think they did so on extreme principles, and because they thought them young vipers and the spawn of Satan, that might contaminate Christ by their neighborhood. They merely thought them beneath the notice of one so great as their Master; too small, too insignificant. Christ judged otherwise. The faces and bearing of these little children reminded Him of the far land from which He had descended,—of angels, heaven, His Father's house. He thought Himself back at His native region. And He said, "of such is the kingdom of heaven." Heaven is composed of characters similar to these; and these, if not checked and retarded by the evil influences of the world, are on their way to heaven, and were these dying now, they would go there.

REV. JOHN KER, GLASGOW.

In the 14th chapter of the first book of Kings, there is a short history which, within the same compass, is not, perhaps, surpassed by any

other in the Old Testament for graphic touch, solemn interest, and real pathos, — the narrative of the life and death of Abijah, the son of Jeroboam. The picture of the irreligious father, pierced to the quick in his heart's tenderest affections; his appeal in behalf of his dying child to the God he had forsaken; the strange commingling of folly with his appeal, in ordering his wife to feign herself to be another, as if He who could save from death could not see through disguise; the submissive compliance of the anxious mother, her journey to the blind and aged prophet, the terrible word and death sentence which met her on the threshold, and her return to a home already filled with the bitterness of those who mourn for a first-born, — all form a story of wonderful and tragic interest.

But it is to the rays of light in it that we would turn, and they all issue from one point, — the death of a child. It is as if in a time and place in which hopeless degeneracy reigned among the more mature, God wished to show how he could still make up the jewels for His crown; gathering them out of the darkest pits of this earth and showing us their glitter, before He gave them their heavenly setting. It is a ground of great comfort and hope, when our eye and heart are wearied with

sights and histories of full-developed wickedness among heathen at home and abroad. Where the death of the young is most sadly abundant, may we not reverently trust, that behind the physical causes which are working there, a purpose of mercy lies hidden? — as if the gleaming form of the angel of life could be discerned hastening to bind up the sheaves which the death-reaper is cutting down. There are other methods of delivering from the Sodoms and Gomorrahs of the world than flight by the way of the plain; and God has higher mountains to carry His elect to, than that which was a refuge for righteous Lot.

The notice of this life is very brief. Little could be said of it on this world's side, it was so colorless and unsensational. How far it had passed from infancy into childhood we cannot say, — probably only a few short steps. But the great end of life had been gained, even in regard to character; not its maturity indeed, but its direction. This is the main thing in our present life. "Even a child is known by his doings, whether his work be pure and whether it be right." The first step has been taken in the path which leads to everlasting life, and if death comes, it is God's acceptance of the traveller's aim, — the seal of perpetuity set upon that Zionward look. The

Hosanna passes at once into a Hallelujah. The way in which this tendency of character is described, is very tender and very comforting to those who have lost little children. "In him there is found some good thing toward the Lord God of Israel in the house of Jeroboam." The very vagueness and indefiniteness of it are full of kindness and charity; for though the "*some*" is not expressed in the original, it is really implied. An indescribable *somewhat*, different in different natures, and discernible oftentimes only by a parent's eye, will show how a very young child's heart turns to the thought of God and Christ, and the heavenly world. It is perhaps realized only when the child has been taken away; and he must be cold and hard who can listen with indifference to a parent, while the smallest of these tokens are fondly rehearsed, — the slightest motions of the tender blade as it quivered beneath the Spirit's breath. He does not despise these tokens who quenches not the smoking flax, and who, when there was no loving paternal eye here to make search, came and sought them Himself. There must be some such force in the words "*there is found*," as if God were seeking something which His eye could rest on with complacency in this monarch's house, and

found it in the heart of this young child feebly feeling after Him. It was the one great treasure of the palace in the sight of Him who knows to discriminate the gold from the dross.

There is a testimony to the power of the grace of God in the words, "*in the house of Jeroboam.*" It was certainly He who found the good thing in the child's heart who had first hidden it there. There is none good but one, that is God; and there is nothing good toward Him but what comes from Him. To find the treasure in such a palace was as rare a thing as marvellously beautiful, — the equivalent in the Old Testament of "saints in Cæsar's household," and more of a miracle in its way than that of him who was kept from the lion's mouth, or those who passed through the fiery furnace without the smell of fire on their garments. The spiritual life is the higher, and to implant and guard it in such a crisis is a work more divine. What means God's providence employed to carry the seed of that good thing into the heart, we cannot tell. Whether the mother did not wholly share the father's godless life, or whether there was some nurse or attendant who became a foster-parent to the soul, we know not. The power of God's Spirit to teach was in any

case the same. In nothing, perhaps, is the divinity of the Scripture revelation more apparent, than in the way in which the mind of the youngest child can not only touch but comprehend its grandest truths, — grasp with its infant hand the infinite. The breath that inspired the Bible comes evidently from Him who breathes into us the breath of life; they are so fitted to each other. Try science or philosophy, or the history of nations, in their power of quickening and elevating the first movements of the spirit, compared with the doings and sayings of the Maker and Saviour of the soul. This is a never-failing encouragement to parents to begin early the religious training of their children; and it is a sure ground of hope, that the soul which, in its first essay, can take such a hold of the highest truth, is made for an immortal life. There are deaths of babes and sucklings from which God can perfect praise, so as to still the enemy and the avenger. He can kindle a little lamp in our earthly homes, so bright, that we can see Him carrying it up to make of it a star in the highest firmament. When, as in this instance, it is kindled we know not how; when it shines solitary but steadfast through some cloud-rift in a troubled sky, — it lets us see a peculiar power in his grace; but in every

instance in which we see Him writing His new name upon a young heart before He takes it to Himself, we are bound to look upon his work with a very loving and hopeful admiration. Never is it more manifest that it is not for time but for eternity He is doing it; that He is taking up the lamp of our home to shine in the sky above all cloud and tempest. "It shall never perish, neither shall any pluck it out of my hand."

The death of the child of Jeroboam, no less than the good thing found in his life, has lessons of encouragement and comfort. As it regarded the family from which he was taken, his death is spoken of as a judgment; but it is only because they refused to understand its true meaning. The history looks at it in the light of the result; but in the Divine intention it was sent in kindly warning. Jeroboam had been a sinner and a seducer to sin, and he had been repeatedly admonished in vain. His right arm had been withered and healed again, and still he resisted. A child was sent to him, in whose young heart there was some good thing toward God, and he despised the attraction; and now that child is removed, "if" his heart may be melted by the tenderness of sorrow, and led to hear a voice from its grave. Happy for him if the death of his

child had proved the life of his soul. Then, though the child had not been restored, he would have been enabled to say, "I shall go to him." But he went on frowardly in the way of his heart, and the death which was sent in mercy is written down in judgment. It is our own use of these events which makes them gentle or stern: as we bear ourselves to them, they turn to us their side of light, or frown upon us from the cloud, till the chariot-wheels of the heart drive heavily. Never does God woo more tenderly, or seek to win for heaven more attractively, than in the love of a child taken to the skies in its opening months or years. If we have been lying fettered in worldly sloth and sin, He is sending his angel to deliver us out of the prison.

But if there was mercy offered to the parents in the death of the child, there was the full accomplishment of it to the child himself. Could we but see the future in this world from which a premature departure saves, and the future in another to which it conveys, it would help to reconcile us to the frost which withers many an opening blossom. There were trials lying in wait for his spiritual life which could be in no other way escaped. The good thing which was in him as a child would be for a while reckoned by the father a childish caprice; but

as it grew with his years and strengthened with his growth, it would have encountered stern opposition, and the allurements of his position would have laid many a snare for his feet. He was yet in the peaceful harbor, but soon he must venture out on the open sea, with its fierce storms, its adverse currents, and its deceitful eddies. God's power could, and doubtless would, have kept him safe amid all; but He deemed it more merciful to spare him the struggle, and to hasten the course of the frail bark, like that of the ship into which the Saviour entered, immediately to the land whither it was going. "The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations," — some by grace in this world, others by an early call from it.

He was saved from witnessing and sharing the suffering and ruin which soon afterwards overtook his father's house. The catastrophe had been delayed, perhaps by the unconscious intercession of this young life; but it could not be averted. The axe is lying at the root of the barren and withered tree which has cumbered the ground so long; but first the tender vine which has clasped its arms so lovingly around it, must be gently untwined and transplanted to a place of safety, where it may flourish in a better soil, and under a more

peaceful sky. A flood of desolating waters is about to sweep over the wide land of Israel, but God must prepare an ark for his young servant, ere the storm can break. What though that ark be his grave? It is full of happiness and hope to those who are shut in by the hand of God. "Thou wilt hide me in the grave; thou wilt keep me secret, until thy wrath be past; thou wilt appoint me a set time, and remember me." "The righteous is taken away from the evil to come."

The mercy of the early death is still more clear, when we think of what the child was taken to. When faith lets us look within the veil, we see Him who long afterwards assumed bodily form and speech, beginning his gracious invitation, "Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of heaven." Surely He was in this place though they knew it not. Neither was it far from this in time or place that a prophet was about to speak of Him: "He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: He shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom;" and here already He is bringing home the firstlings of His flock. There were many bright hopes before the child to human eyes; but such a word of invitation might well outweigh them all. He was taken

from the expectation of an earthly crown to the possession of a heavenly one; from the troubled and precarious dominion of Israel to a kingdom that cannot be moved; from the protection of a father who, however well he loved him, knew not his true interests, to the care and nurture of the Father of spirits; from an earthly mother's tenderness to Him who created it, and who says, "As one whom a mother comforteth, so will I comfort you;" from the loud wail of a sorrowing nation to the joyful acclaim of the nations of the saved; from the tears of kindred to the bosom of the family where they weep no more. Is it well with the child? and shall we not answer? It is well.

It is a blessed thing when bereaved parents can so reply, when faith can lean on God, and hope can look up to heaven, and love can tenderly smooth the short green grave where God has hidden their heart's desire — his precious seed — and they, mourning but not murmuring, can patiently bide the time till He shall give it back to them, in the day when flower and fruit, freshness and ripeness, are found united, and a joy with them like unto the joy of harvest. Let us not ask why the child entered this world only to quit it, and made its brief home in our hearts to leave them more lonely and desolate. It is one token that there is

another world, when there are so short sojournings in this. The entrance of the child into the life of earth, however narrow its space, is as true a beginning of the life that never ends, as the threescore years and ten; and its share in the great atonement as real and full as that of him who has borne, through all the appointed hours, the burden and heat of the day! Its release and his labor are alike of grace, and have their place and purpose in the innumerable family of the redeemed. There must be many varied voices in the harmonies of heaven, as well as in the choirs of earth. There, too, "both young men and maidens, old men and children, must praise the name of the Lord." Nor has its short life been in vain, even on earth, if it has drawn the affections of any to a heavenly world, — if the sweet bird of passage which nestled beneath our eaves has attracted the heart to the sun and summer of a better land. — Then, "the child dies an hundred years old." Only let it be the earnest wish and effort of parents who have lost their children, to make sure of this, — to see to it that the separation is not perpetual, and that the bond be made as eternal as it is deep and dear. There is no judgment in such deaths, no sting in such sorrows; but goodness and mercy — pure, unmingled, and everlasting — to parent

and to child. "Thus saith the Lord: Refrain thy voice from weeping, and thine eyes from tears; for there is hope in thine end, saith the Lord, that thy children shall come again to their own border."

REV. DR. RALPH WARDLAW, GLASGOW.

"WHILE the child was yet alive, I fasted and wept; for I said, Who can tell whether God will be gracious to me, that the child may live? But now he is dead, wherefore should I fast? can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me."

Let not this be interpreted as the language of *insensibility*. The general character of David, and his previous behavior on the same occasion, ought to save him from every imputation of this kind. No. His heart was full of paternal and conjugal tenderness. Fain would he have brought back his babe to his own fond embrace, and to the breast of its disconsolate mother. But the thought was vain. All was now over. The last sigh with which the infant spirit escaped to wing its way to the world of light, had settled the case with regard to the child. David had found his consolation in God, and he had the richest and sweetest of

all comforts respecting his infant. The language, "*I shall go to him*," is evidently the language of comfort, by which he was supported under the anguish that would otherwise have been intolerable in the thought of what follows: "*but he shall not return to me.*" It does not, then, it *cannot* refer to *the grave.* The child was not in the grave when the words were uttered; nor do I believe there was any thought of the grave in the bereaved parent's mind. What consolation could there have been in *that*, that *he*, too, should lie down a cold, inanimate corpse? This was not *going to him* in any sense that could impart the slightest satisfaction to the afflicted spirit. The words clearly imply firm conviction of his child's existence and happiness. "I shall go to him," means, I shall go whither he has now gone. And if his afterwards joining him there was an object of hope, there is necessarily implied the persuasion of his having gone to a place of happiness. How sweetly soothing, how inestimably precious is the same thought still to the agonized bosom of parental love! How delightfully tranquillizing, when the first burst of nature's agony has a little subsided, the reflection that your child has been taken away from the evil to come, — taken, to spend those years in heaven, which he must otherwise have spent amidst

sin, and temptation, and sorrow, in the valley of tears: that he has been spared all the perils, and fatigues, and fightings of the wilderness, and has been received at the better country, even the heavenly; that the tender and lovely plant which you had begun to cherish with so much care has been happily removed from all the chilling frosts and withering blasts of this inferior clime, and has found its place in the garden of God above, there to drink the dews of paradise, and to flourish in unfading beauty! It is a settled, undoubting, delightful serenity which the soul enjoys in contemplating the departure of *little children*. Think of what the kind and gracious Redeemer said of them, when, with a frown on those who would have forbidden their being brought to him, and a smile of ineffable benignity on the little immortals themselves, He said: "Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God;" and, taking them up in His arms, He blessed them. Think, then, of their blessedness, and that will soothe your grief.

The following is an extract from an unpublished letter, addressed by Dr. Wardlaw, to his daughter and her husband, the Rev. J.

Reid, M.A., Bellary, India, on the death of their child, in 1833:—

With regard to your precious little darling, *all is well.* He is not lost,—not lost even to *you.* He is only gone home before you; and in the everlasting home you will by and by find him. . . . It is a delightful thought, that of having part of ourselves with God before us. And then the confidence is so perfect, so entirely free from all misgivings, so sweetly tranquil, unruffled by the least breath of doubt, in regard to "little children." Did not you hear the compassionate Redeemer saying to you, as He was loosing the band of life, "Suffer your little child to come unto me"? He said this when on earth. He says it from heaven, when He thus takes away the "babes and sucklings" of His own people's fond affections, that "out of their lips" He may "perfect praise" above.

REV. DR. ALEX. MACLEOD, BIRKENHEAD.

"Your little ones, which ye said would be a prey, and your children, which in that day had no knowledge between good and evil, *they shall go in thither.*"—DEUT. i. 39.

YOU are in circumstances to welcome light from whatever quarter on the destiny of children dying at the age of yours.

I have lying before me the analysis of an argument from Analogy on this subject, which made a great impression on me at the time I first saw it, and may be of use to you at present. The argument is based upon the admission of children into the promised land.

I need not remind you that there is an analogy between the land which was once the land of promise to the Jews, and our heavenly home. From that land, for their sins, the fathers were excluded, Caleb and Joshua alone excepted. But of the children it is said, "*They* shall go in thither." If this was so in the case of the earthly Canaan; if the children of parents, who themselves were excluded, were favored in this way; if they were the subjects of mercy, while their fathers were the objects of punitive justice, — how much more may we expect it to take place in respect to the heavenly Canaan? The point here is, that the exclusion of children does not follow the exclusion of parents. If it did, all would have been excluded except the children of Caleb and Joshua.

The *reason assigned by God* for this procedure is one which will be applicable at the day of judgment. "Your children, which *in that day had no knowledge between good and evil*, they shall go in." It is true they were

living when their fathers rebelled against God; but they were not partakers in the rebellion. In the day of provocation they were gambolling about the green fields in innocent ignorance of what was taking place: they were not yet capable of distinguishing between good and evil, and, therefore, they were not excluded. But since we are speaking of the dealings of the unchangeable God, we may safely conclude that He will acknowledge the force of the same reasons in the final judgment. The infants who die, carry with them towards the judgment throne no knowledge of good or evil, no experience of the bitterness of offending God. And they will not be involved in the condemnation of the wicked.

If you next consider the purposes for which children were admitted into Canaan, you will see that similar purposes require fulfilment in their admission into heaven. One of these purposes is referred to in the verse quoted at the top: "Your little ones, which *ye said should be a prey*." If you read carefully the fourteenth chapter of Numbers, verses 1–3, you will understand the force of the rebuke. Sin had blotted out their faith in God. "Their children were sure to perish!" They themselves, too, would perish. So they thought. And *they* were indeed to perish. But the helpless

ones, the innocent, the unpartaking, were to go free. Now the admission of the children into Canaan, after the expression of unbelief on the part of the parents, was a vindication of God's ways, an answer to the unbelief of the parents, and a perpetual token that God deals with infants on the ground of saving mercy. It is glorious to think that God is preparing a reply to the doubts and disbeliefs of all who are far from Him, by a similar exercise of grace. Sceptics, infidels, heathens, expect nothing for *their* children but death, temporal and eternal. How will they be amazed when they discover, in another state, that God has been better than their thoughts; and although they (because of their sins) are excluded, their children have been admitted into His presence. — Still further, God had this purpose in bringing the children into Canaan, that they should advance His standard into new territory, build up His kingdom, and be the organ of His praise. Has He not the same purpose in respect of heaven? He chooses not to be alone throughout eternity. And (blessed prospect!) from the mouth of babes and sucklings He ordains the strength of His eternal hallelujahs. He who could raise up children to Abraham from the stones, will not want the power to fill heaven with their loving and delightful songs.

REV. DR. ALEX. WALLACE, GLASGOW.

I HAVE often been struck with the following passage in connection with the subject of infant salvation: "Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength because of thine enemies, that thou mightest still the enemy and the avenger." (Ps. viii. 2.) The enemy and the avenger referred to here is, I think, Satan, who would avenge himself, if he could, by destroying the whole human race. But his revengeful desires have been thwarted, inasmuch as many helpless babes have been made the subjects of renewing grace. More than this: I suppose the majority of our race die in infancy; these, I believe, are all lambs of the "Good Shepherd," and are taken to Himself: "for of such is the kingdom of God." In this way the Father of mercy "ordains strength, stills the enemy and the avenger;" because, in the salvation of infants, the number of the saved is greater than the lost. Our Saviour quoted this ancient oracle, when the children sung His praises in the temple, and He silenced those who were instigated by the "enemy and the avenger" to find fault with the children and their songs. Many children now sing the praises of the "Good

Shepherd" in the temple above, and your dear child is there, too, and of her and many more are the ancient words true, "Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength."

REV. DR. ROBERT FERGUSON, LONDON.

As partakers of a fallen nature, children are subject to disease and death. Much and tenderly as we love them, it is not unfrequently that we are called to follow them to the silence and the solitude of the tomb. More than one-third of the race die in infancy and childhood. What is their final condition? This is a question which often forces itself upon the thought of Christian parents, and which more or less disturbs their inward peace and quiet. But how tranquillizing, and how assuring, are the words of the Saviour, "of such is the kingdom of heaven"!—as if to intimate that heaven is their true and proper home, their Father's house, in which only they can be for ever safe and happy. Of the salvation of infants there can be no possible doubt; for, "as in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive."

Whatever may be the effects involved in man's transgression, these are all provided for and removed by the substitution and the work of Christ; so that if there were no personal sin or actual guilt, the Saviour's mediation would result in the salvation of the whole race. From all such individual, actual guilt, infants are free; and the atonement insures their introduction into the family of God, with a full participation in the glory of the world to come. But myriads of children, no longer within the years of infancy, are permitted to light up our homes with their smiling, beaming faces for a longer or shorter period, and in many ways to add to the sum of our earthly joys, and yet are taken from us while the dew of youth is upon them, and sometimes amid the first and earliest buddings of their intellectual development and intelligence. What is *their* final condition? It is impossible to fix on any one uniform age in a child as the point at which responsibility begins; but let the age be what it may, we are firm in the belief that the Spirit whom the Saviour sent to glorify Him, and whose office it is to take of the things which are Christ's and show them to us, not only enlightens the minds of these little ones prior to their removal, but so reveals a Saviour's love to them and in them as to draw their

young and susceptible hearts into union and fellowship with Himself here, and thus prepare and meeten them for the life and the bliss of a higher state. If in all things Christ is to have the pre-eminence, then He will have the pre-eminence in numbers. The saved will far outnumber the lost; and among these redeemed and glorified ones, those whose hearts have been least defiled by actual sin, and who are most susceptible of receiving the impression of the Saviour's image, will occupy a conspicuous place. Just as a single dew-drop can reflect all the rays of the sun, so the mind of a child can take on and reflect the likeness of God: "of such is the kingdom of God." They are there in myriad throngs,—pure, perfect, and for ever blessed. They perfect the family of God. Their presence makes that home of the redeemed all the brighter, and sunnier, and more attractive. There is no circle into which they do not enter, no scene in which they do not mingle, and no service in which they do not perform their part.

REV. DR. J. LOGAN AIKMAN, GLASGOW.

THE argument for infant salvation rests, not on isolated passages, but on the genius of the Bible and its economy of grace. We muse upon the mission of Christ to find one of its principal glories in glorified infancy. The inhabitants of Christian and Pagan lands shall be judged respectively by the Gospel and by conscience, but to neither law can infants be subject. The death of children is traceable to the sin of Adam, and their glory to the righteousness of Christ. The only view which harmonizes universal scripture is, that the redemption by Christ completely covers the sin of Adam, that adults in Bible lands are judged according to their faith or unbelief in the Son of God, and that Christ's covenant with His Father carries the salvation of all infants.

There is an intuitive conviction that infants, who have not *personally* rejected the law and love of God, cannot be excluded from the kingdom, and that they are as fully identified with the second as with the first Adam. There may be a higher degree of glory given to some translated infants because of their godly parentage. But the soul of man clings to the thought

of no infant being lost in the universe of that God, whose "tender mercies are over all His works."

REV. DR. EDWARD STEANE, LONDON.

We arrive at the conclusion, so delightful in itself, and so consolatory to parents in the hour of bereavement, that their precious children whom, in the sweetness of their infantile innocence, the cold hand of death has rifled from their bosoms, are translated to the regions of the blest. Those delicate flowers, which the rude storms of our inclement atmosphere have blighted, unfold in eternal fragrancy beneath the pleasant beams of the sun's celestial glory. Those bright, but little stars, which to us seem prematurely quenched, do but sink beneath the horizon till, with new lustre and augmented magnitude, they repair their drooping radiance, and "Flame in the forehead of the morning sky." Those gems, more precious than pearls or rubies, of which the anguished mother has been despoiled, are set in deeper brilliance in that glorious mediatorial diadem which encircles the Redeemer's brow. Those infantile voices, which had scarce learnt to lisp His name, now sing in lofty descants, "Sal-

vation to him that sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb." Then let the stricken hearts of parents, whom death has made childless, no longer indulge an immoderate grief. Your beloved and lamented offspring, looking down from their heavenly spheres, would chide your sorrow. Among the ransomed they have taken their immortal stations.

REV. DR. WILLIAM COOKE, LONDON.

ONE of the most beautiful incidents of the Redeemer's life affords to the question of infant salvation a most decisive and satisfactory solution. There stands the Incarnate God! Truth beams from His lips, and healing power radiates from His omnipotent touch. Mothers in Israel gather around Him, and anxiously present their children for His benediction. The disciples, ignorant of the depth and tenderness of His sympathies, and knowing as yet but little of the benign purpose of His coming, rebuke the tender women for their intrusion, and thrust them and their children away from His presence. But He, the messenger of truth, and the procurer of life and salvation for all, bids the trembling women draw near to

Him, and welcomes their children to His loving arms, uttering those memorable words, "Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God." (Mark x. 14.) Nor can the word "such" be frittered down to mere likeness; and, if it were, the likeness itself would indicate a fitness for the kingdom; and if a fitness, a title thereto through grace. But another text gives the meaning of the word a direct personal application to children themselves as such: "Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones [little children being then in His presence]: for I say unto you that in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven." (Matt. xviii. 10.) These plain and striking words settle for ever the question of infant salvation. In heaven the little ones are angels, blessed spirits, dwelling in God's immediate presence, beholding His face, and rejoicing in the light of His countenance.

Parents, wipe away your tears: your little ones are safe. Though severed from your embrace, they are received into the embraces of Him who died for them and rose again. Lift up your eyes then from the gloomy sepulchre to the radiant throne, and there behold them resplendent in robes of purity, and exultant in the bliss of the Divine presence. Pre-

pare to meet them in that bright world, where the parting tear shall never be shed, and the sad farewell shall never be heard. Meanwhile be unceasingly careful to train your surviving offspring to a meetness for that blessed inheritance, that at the last day, when standing in His glorious presence, you may say respecting both them and yourselves, "Here, Lord, are we, and the children Thou hast given us."

DR. CHALMERS.

I CANNOT believe that the Saviour, who evinced such attachment to children upon earth, who took them in His arms and blessed them, who rebuked the apostles for forbidding their approach to His person, who declared that "of such is the kingdom of heaven," — I cannot believe that the infant flower, which so soon lies withered upon its stalk, is not transplanted into those unfading bowers where it will flourish in all the bloom and vigor of immortality.

REV. DR. CANDLISH, EDINBURGH.

In many ways it may be inferred from Scripture, that all dying in infancy are elect, and are therefore saved.

REV. DR. LAWSON, SELKIRK.

This venerated divine says, in his "Reflections on the Death of a Beloved Daughter,"—He will compensate all her sorrows in that land where sorrow and sighing shall flee away. Sweet hope! Let no man attempt to bereave me of it. It is founded on the Scriptures, on the mercy of God, and on the exceedingly abundant grace of the Lord Jesus Christ. I will not renounce this hope. It appears to me to be founded on the sure word of God.

JEREMY TAYLOR.

Why should Jesus be an Infant, but that infants should receive the crown of their age, the purification of their sainted nature, the

sanctification of their persons, and the saving of their souls by their infant Lord and Elder Brother.

EVANS.

YOUR heavenly Father never thought this world's painted glory a gift worthy of you, and therefore He hath taken out the best thing it had in your sight that He might Himself fill the heart He had wounded *with* Himself.

REV. JOHN NEWTON.

I AM willing to believe, till the Scripture forbids me, that infants of all nations and kindreds, without exception, who die before they are capable of sinning "after the similitude of Adam's transgression," who have done nothing in the body of which they can give account, are included in the election of grace; and that the words of our Lord with respect to another class of persons, are applicable to them: "It is not the will of your Father in heaven that one of these little ones should perish."

CONSOLATION.

PARENTAL ANXIETY REMOVED BY THE EARLY DEATH OF CHILDREN.

REV. DR. JOHN MACFARLANE, LONDON.

THE ardent love you have for your children is not altogether pleasurable. It necessarily carries you into many anxious thoughts about their welfare. In this sense, they are a burden to you, and this burden becomes all the heavier the more you love them. Your own experience of this world has not exalted it, as a place of residence, in your estimation. You have tested its promises, and found them false and vain. You have tasted its pleasures, and found that they "bite like a serpent, and sting like an adder." You have groaned under its pains and penalties, and you have found out that help from man is in vain, and that miserable comforters

are all that crowd around you in the night seasons of your soul, and sore disquietudes. You, therefore, tremble when you think of your darling infants living to be cast upon such revolutionary periods in the troubled life of man, wherein, though they may preserve their integrity, they must endure hardships, but in which, also, they may lose their precious souls for ever. Their futurity, then, is at once your main difficulty, and your most fertile source of anxious foreboding. Now, has not their early death solved this difficulty for you, and ought it not, therefore, also to be your consolation? You will never have any more anxiety on their account. The various hiding-places in your hearts, from which these anxieties spring upon you, have been searched, and by death have been completely emptied.

THEIR EDUCATION IS COMPLETED. — They "know as they are known." Your utmost wish in this respect was to give them, if not a learned, at least a useful education. But God has been better than your wish. They are now in knowledge far beyond the most splendid scholars and most profound philosophers of this and of every age. Their intellectual stature is only to be accounted small when compared with the wisdom of God Himself.

Neither before angels, nor the spirits of the just made perfect, have they to veil their faces.

THEIR HOLINESS IS PERFECTED. — Not one of the infirmities they inherited from you now appertains to them, they are "holy as God is holy." Did you tremble at the thought of their exposure to the temptations of Satan and the flesh? Be assured now that they are "more than conquerors through Him that loved them." Exquisitely beautiful now are those dear creatures in all the graces of the family of God. Their thoughts, their desires, their actions, are at this moment in perfect harmony with the mind of the Holy One of Israel. The same mind that is in Christ is in them; they do the will of their heavenly Father, and *He* is pleased with them every moment, and every moment delights their happy souls with His approving smile.

THEIR HAPPINESS IS CONSUMMATED. — You were not at ease as to measures for their future provision, and even with respect to the most likely ones, you feared that they might fail. To make them comfortable for life you are ready to sacrifice much, and you never wearied in efforts to secure for them an honorable independence. Their futurity was upon your minds all the day, and oft took from you the sleep of all the night. Surely, then, you may

cease from lamentation, when you are certified that, as they shall sin no more, so neither shall they suffer any more. They are as happy now as they can be. God has provided for them in heaven. They are now inheriting the promises. They are now in actual possession and enjoyment of "that inheritance which is incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away." Within them is a "well of water springing up into everlasting life;" without them is the perennial flow of the river of life; above them is the unclouded sun of God's favor; and around them are gathered the inexhaustible fountains of celestial bliss. They are so happy now that they are for ever singing. And if ever there should be a "Selah" to their song, it is only to draw in a larger inspiration for a more melodious burst of praise. They would not return to you now, much though they loved you and you them. They do not miss you now, much though you miss them. Your sorrows do not diminish their joys, and their joys ought to diminish your sorrows. Oh, who would bring them back again *here*, to toil, and sweat, and suffer, and, perhaps, to sin without penitence, and to die without faith? You, O weeping parent, ought to be the very last to think of it, and yours should ever be the song of gratitude.

RECOGNITION AFTER THE RESURRECTION.

REV. DR. WM. ANDERSON, GLASGOW.

How different in character will be the meeting after the resurrection! when that grave, feared as a destroyer, shall be demonstrated, as made of Christ, the regenerator of our friends — rendering back in incorruption that which it received in corruption, in glory that which it received in dishonor, in power that which it received in weakness,* a spiritual body, fit as a tabernacle for the glorified soul, that which it received a natural body, an impediment to

* In the inscription on the tombstone of my child, I have thus paraphrased the Scripture, "Sown in Infancy, he shall be raised in Manhood." — When once comforting a bereaved saint with the assurance that she was the mother of a heavenly family, and that she would yet see her children in the kingdom, she inquired what I thought they would be like. I quoted 1 Cor. xv. 43 to her. "Does that mean," she said, "that they will appear like *men?*" I answered, "I thought many interpretations were further from the truth." "I like that well enough," she replied, "but, oh, that it might please the Lord to show them to me, just as they were in this world, though it should be but for a minute!" — On the subject of the mode of recognition, I remark, that there are phenomena being daily exhibited, which make it no fantasy to suppose, that the ardent wish of a mother's heart going forth over the kingdom may have an attractive influence in selecting and bringing her child to her side.

its exercises. Hosannah to the Lord of Resurrection for this blessed hope! Yea, so overwhelming is its glory, that it is like to obscure our faith. How shall the mother recognize her son, who departed from her an emaciated infant, in yonder angelic form in the vigor and brilliancy of resurrection manhood? And how shall the father, who wept bitter tears in secret over his daughter's decrepitude, distinguish her in yonder seraph of celestial grace? What mean you, friends? You surely cannot wish to meet your children in that plight of wretchedness in which you bade them farewell, so that, unassisted, you could of yourselves recognize them. The Lord will provide; but methinks it will, probably, be a busy day for those good angels who ministered to us on earth, finding us out for one another, and introducing us. Remembering how they had seen us grieve for one another, how sympathetically they will enjoy the scene, as we stand amazed for a while at one another's glory before we embrace!

How many parents there are, who have almost entirely forgotten those of their children who died in infancy; and who, being inquired at about the number of their family, will, so unlike that sweet faithful child who so resolutely maintained "we are seven," give account

only of those who live, — the least worthy of being reckoned! Faithless father and mother, that you are! amid all your rapture, how ashamed you shall be of your forgetfulness, when these neglected ones are restored to you, so beautiful and glorious; and especially when, under that angel-guidance, they hasten with such excitement to meet with those of whom they are told, that under the Creator they were the authors of their existence! Nor will it be with little excitement that they hasten to meet *you*, their brothers and sisters, with whom they may associate and worship, as being more of their own nature than any others to be found in all the kingdom. The whole of you — brothers and sisters, as well as parents — meditate on them; the thought is most sanctifying: it endears the Redeemer with peculiar attraction to a tender heart; and, remember, there are no hearts great which are not tender.

A WORD OF WARNING TO MOTHERS

REV. DR. WM. ANDERSON, GLASGOW.

THE Psalmist says of God, "There is none upon earth that I desire beside Thee," speaking evidently, comparatively, and signifying

that among many objects desired, God received the supreme place. This is a subject of familiar illustration. But David said something before that: "Whom have I *in heaven* but Thee?" Ah, let the bereaved mother be admonished. If the vision of her child in heaven be more frequent, and more endeared to her heart than the vision of the child's Saviour; and much more, if the vision of the former so engross her heart as to exclude the vision of the latter altogether, — I must assure her that heavenly-mindedness such as this will not promote that heavenly meeting on which her hope is set. Her first object of admiring contemplation in heaven must be *her own* Saviour; and her great hope must be, meeting with Him, and seeing Him in his glory, before any meditation on the present happiness of her deceased child be of a sanctifying character; and before any hope of meeting again with that child in heavenly bliss be a hope not to be disappointed. I would express myself tenderly, when it is a bereaved mother's heart which is addressed; but would it be genuine tenderness if it were delusive, flattering unfaithfulness? Hope first in Christ for yourself, and then hope, not for your child's salvation (that is secure), but that you shall enjoy companionship with Him in glory.

RESTORATION OF CHILDREN IN HEAVEN.

REV. DR. JOHN BROWN, EDINBURGH.

WITH what delight will parents, themselves released from the captivity of the grave, behold their early-lost, long-mourned children coming forth, not the pale, emaciated, lifeless, ghastly forms they reluctantly committed to the grave, but strong in incorruptibility, glorious in beauty, "fashioned like unto Christ's glorious body." Then shall it appear to the assembled universe, that among the redeemed of the Lord, fathers have not hoped in vain, nor mothers brought forth for trouble. "They are the seed of the blessed of the Lord, and their offspring with them."

But it will be long, long ere they return. The captivity of death is measured, not by years, but by ages. What then? It is but the few, it may be the very few, remaining days of the years of our pilgrimage, which prevent our spirits from embracing theirs; and in the resting-places prepared for us, though we shall not cease to desire, we shall never weary for "the adoption, the redemption of the body." "Be patient, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord, Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and

hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain. Be ye also patient; and stablish your hearts." Then "those young and tender plants, which are now cut down, and withering around us, shall spring up in fairer and more durable forms." "The children of the resurrection cannot die any more, but are equal to the angels."

Having been raised from the dead, they shall "mount up together in the clouds," along with those who have been miraculously changed, "to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall they ever be with the Lord." Among that glorious company shall be found those infants and little children whose untimely departure to "the land of the enemy" drew forth such tender regrets and bitter tears. They shall not only "return," but "come to Zion, with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." They shall not only leave for ever the dark and lonesome abodes of death, but they shall for ever dwell in the cheerful regions of perfect life, and light, and joy. They shall not only be brought from the land of the enemy, but they shall be "brought in and be planted in the mountain of Jehovah's inheritance, in the place which He has made for Himself to dwell in, in the

sanctuary which His hand has established." There "Jehovah-Jesus shall reign for ever and ever," and there "they shall reign with Him." The long silence of the grave shall be exchanged for the ceaseless ever-new songs of Moses and the Lamb. "Sing unto the Lord, for He hath triumphed gloriously. Who is like unto Jehovah among the gods? Who is like unto Him, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders? He has ransomed us from the power of the grave. He has redeemed us from death. He has swallowed up death in life. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? Thanks be to Him who has given us the victory. Salvation to our God and to the Lamb, for ever and ever. To Him who loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood; to Him be glory and honor for ever and ever. Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, slain for us. Hallelujah!" And again and again the great multitude, with a voice as of many waters and mighty thunderings, shall shout "Hallelujah!" And none in all the happy company will sing more sweetly than the little children.

Then, indeed, shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, "Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise."

THE LIGHT THAT RADIATES AROUND THE INFANT'S TOMB.

REV. DR. CHALMERS, EDINBURGH.

THE following is an extract from Dr. Chalmers's Lectures on the Romans, chap. iv. 9–15:—

This affords, we think, something more than a dubious glimpse into the question that is often put by a distracted mother when her babe is taken away from her, when all the converse it ever had with the world amounted to the gaze upon it of a few months, or a few opening smiles which marked the dawn of felt enjoyment; and ere it had reached perhaps the lisp of infancy, it, all unconscious of death, had to wrestle through a period of sickness with his power, and at length to be overcome by him. Oh, it little knew what an interest it had created in that home where it was so passing a visitant; nor, when carried to its early grave, what a tide of emotion it would raise among the few acquaintance it left behind! On it, too, baptism was impressed as a seal, while as a sign it was never falsified. There was no positive unbelief in its little bosom; no resistance yet put forth to the truth; no love at all for the darkness rather than the light; nor had

it yet fallen into that great condemnation which will attach to all who perish because of unbelief, that their deeds are evil. It is interesting to know that God instituted circumcision for the infant children of Jews, and at least suffered baptism for the infant children of those who profess Christianity. Should the child die in infancy, the use of baptism as a sign has never been thwarted by it; and may we not be permitted to indulge a hope so pleasing, as that the use of baptism as a seal remains in all its entireness,—that He who sanctioned the affixing of it to a babe will fulfil upon it the whole expression of this ordinance? And when we couple with this the known disposition of our great Forerunner—the love that He manifested to children on earth—how He suffered them to approach His person—and lavishing endearment and kindness upon them in the streets of Jerusalem, told His disciples that the presence and company of such as these in heaven formed one ingredient of the joy that was set before Him—tell us if Christianity do not throw a pleasing radiance around an infant's tomb? And should any parent who hears us feel softened by the touching remembrance of a light that twinkled a few short months under his roof, and at the end of its little period expired, we cannot think that we

venture too far when we say that he has only to persevere in the faith, and in the following of the gospel, and that very light will again shine upon him in heaven. The blossom which withered here upon its stalk has been transplanted there to a place of endurance, and it will then gladden that eye which now weeps out the agony of an affection that has been sorely wounded; and in the name of Him, who, if on earth, would have wept along with them, do we bid all believers present to sorrow not even as others which have no hope, but to take comfort in the thought of that country where there is no sorrow and no separation.

"Oh, when a mother meets on high
The babe she lost in infancy,
Hath she not then, for pains and fears—
The day of woe, the watchful night—
For all her sorrow, all her tears—
An over-payment of delight?"

JOHN BROWN AND HIS LITTLE GRAVES.

DAVID PAE, EDINBURGH.

IN the churchyard, and in matters connected with it, John Brown seemed quite a different man from what he was anywhere else. Genial, free, and hearty in his own house and the village, he was grave and taciturn in the dis-

charge of his funeral duties, and watched over the place of tombs with a jealous care. This part of his character no one could read but the parish minister: he alone had the key to it. The secret, however, was this. The deepest affections of his soul centred on the enclosed two acres, which he had tended for twenty years. He regarded it with a pride and even a love, as great as, and very similar to, that with which an enthusiastic gardener looks upon his domain, and cherishes its floral treasures. Every new-made grave was to John like a flower which he had planted, and it was added in his memory to the many hundreds which covered the surface of the enclosure; to be thought of and cherished according to the degee of respect and reverence which the sexton had for its inmate. As a gardener has his favorite flowers, so John had his favorite graves, and spent additional time on their adornment. Hence one grave might be seen with a smooth velvet turf, and a flower or two blooming upon it, while those surrounding it were covered with rank masses of grass; thus, by looking at any one grave, it could be known what was the state of John's feelings towards the mouldering dust beneath. His professional love was particularly lavished on the little ones. For the children's graves he had a peculiar affection

and reverence. Not one of them was suffered to go to waste; and long after the little mound had disappeared, the small level spot was easily found by patches of white clover, — for John invariably sowed this on the little graves, and on none other. Mr. Gray had not been long minister of the parish till he noticed the odd practice of his grave-digger; and one day when he came upon John smoothing and trimming the lowly bed of a child which had been buried a few days before, he asked him why he was so particular in dressing and keeping the graves of the children. John paused for a moment at his work, and looking up, not at the minister, but at the sky, said, "Of such is the kingdom of heaven."

"And on this account you tend and adorn them with so much care," remarked the minister, who was greatly struck with the reply.

"Surely, sir," answered John, "I canna make ower braw and fine the bed-coverin' o' a little innocent sleeper that is waitin' there till it is God's time to wauken it and cover it with the white robe, and waft it away to glory. When sic grandeur is awaitin' it yonder, it's fit it should be decked oot here. I think the Saviour that counts its dust sae precious will like to see the *white clover sheet spread abune't;* dae ye no think sae tae, sir?"

"But why not thus cover larger graves?" asked the minister, hardly able to suppress his emotion. "The dust of all His saints is precious in the Saviour's sight."

"Very true, sir," responded John, with great solemnity, "but I canna be sure wha are his saints and wha are no. I hope there are mony o' them lyin' in this kirkyard; but it wad be great presumption in me to mark them oot. There are some that I'm gey sure aboot, and I keep their graves as nate and snod as I can, and plant a bit floure here and there as a sign o' my hope; but I daurna gie them the white sheet. It's clean different, tho', wi' the bairns. We hae His ain word for their upgoing, and sae I canna mak' an error there. Some folk, I believe, are bauld enough to say that it's only the infants of the guid that will be saved."

"And do you adhere to that doctrine?" inquired Mr. Gray.

John answered by pointing to a little patch a few paces off, which was thickly covered with clover,

"That ane," he said, "is the bairn o' Tam Lutton, the collier. Ye ken Tam, sir?"

Mr. Gray did, indeed, know Tam, for he was the most notorious swearer, liar, and drunkard in the parish; and John did not

require to say any more to show that he disbelieved the doctrine of the condemnation of infants.

"It's no only cruel and blasphemous," he continued, in a dry, sarcastic way, "but it's quite absurd. Jist tak' that bairn o' Tam's as an example. According to their belief it's lost; because we may, without ony breach o' charity, say that Tam is at present a reprobate. But he is still in the place of hope, sir; and it is quite possible that he may be converted. What comes o' the bairn then? Na, na," he added, looking reverently upward, "God is merciful, and Jesus died; and it was He that said, 'Of such is the kingdom of heaven.'"

Mr. Gray was much struck by the deep feeling and fervent piety manifested by the grave-digger, and thought he would extract more of his ideas regarding the subject on which they had been speaking. For this purpose he pointed to the little grave which John was trimming so neatly, and, knowing it to be that of a still-born child, he observed, —

"Is it not mysterious, John, that the little human form lying there should not have been permitted to cross the porch of existence? I saw it as it lay so still and beautiful in its snowy robe, and as I noticed its perfect form,

with every organ and every limb complete, I was almost tempted to ask why God had made such a beautiful temple in vain."

"'In vain!' say ye," returned John. "Na, no in vain. God mak's naething in vain, far less a form like that in His ain image. Omnipotent as He is, and infinite in His perfections, He canna *afford* tae fashun sic a glorious object only that worms might prey on it. The little marble image lying below this sod is as great a thing as ever God made on this earth. Adam, when he rose up frae the green sward o' Eden, wasna mair physically perfect. He was bigger, nae doot, but nae better formed; and was the ane made in vain ony mair than the ither? Na, na, na! The bairnie, puir lamme, 'll ken naething o' the joys and sorrows, the sunshine and shadow o' this life; but he'll be a pure, unsullied sharer o' the life that is ayont this, and higher than this: for I aye cast anchor on the blessed words spoken by the Redeemer o' men and infants, 'Of such is the kingdom of heaven;' and whan I think o' a still-born wean, I think o' a human being, made, no for time, *but for immortality*."

The minister took John's hand, and silently pressed it. He had got the key to his deeper nature, and was thrilled by its unexpected richness.

"IS IT WELL WITH THE CHILD?"

REV. C. H. SPURGEON, LONDON.

"Is it well with the child? And she answered, It is well."

Now, let every mother and father here present know assuredly that it is well with the child, if God hath taken it away from you in its infant days. You never heard its declaration of faith; it was not capable of such a thing, it was not baptized into the Lord Jesus Christ, not buried with him in baptism; it was not capable of giving that "answer of a good conscience toward God;" nevertheless, you may rest assured that it is well with the child, well in a higher and better sense than it is well with yourselves; well without limitation, well without exception, well infinitely, "well" eternally.

. . . . . .

I now come to make a PRACTICAL USE OF THE DOCTRINE. First, let it be a *comfort to bereaved parents*. You say it is a heavy cross that you have to carry. Remember, *it is easier to carry a dead cross than a living one.* To have a living cross is indeed a tribulation, to have a child who is rebellious in his childhood, vicious in his youth, debauched in his

manhood! Ah, would God that he had died from the birth; would God that he had never seen the light! Many a father's hairs have been brought with sorrow to the grave through his living children, but I think never through his dead babes; certainly not if he were a Christian, and were able to take the comfort of the apostle's words, "We sorrow not as they that are without hope." So you would have your child live? Ah, if you could have drawn aside the veil of destiny, and have seen to what he might have lived! Would you have had him live to ripen for the gallows? Would you have him live to curse his father's God? Would you have him live to make your home wretched, to make you wet your pillow with tears, and send you to your daily work with your hands upon your loins because of sorrow? Such might have been the case; it is not so now, for your little one sings before the throne of God. Do you know from what sorrows your little one has escaped? You have had enough yourself. It was born of woman, it would have been of few days and full of trouble as you are. It has escaped those sorrows; do you lament that? Remember, too, your own sins, and the deep sorrow of repentance. Had that child lived, it would have been a sinner, and it must have known the bitterness of con-

viction of sin. It has escaped that; it rejoices now in the glory of God. Then would you have it back again?

Bereaved parents, could you for a moment see your own offspring above, I think you would very speedily wipe away your tears. There among the sweet voices which sing the perpetual carol may be heard the voice of your own child, an angel now, and you the mother of a songster before the throne of God. You might not have murmured had you received the promise that your child should have been elevated to the peerage; it has been elevated higher than that,—to the peerage of heaven. It has received the dignity of the immortals; it is robed in better than royal garments; it is more rich and more blessed than it could have been if all the crowns of earth could have been put upon its head. Wherefore, then, could you complain? An old poet has penned a verse well-fitted for an infant's epitaph:—

> "Short was my life, the longer is my rest;
> God takes those soonest whom he loveth best;
> Who's born to-day, and dies to-morrow,
> Loses some hours of joy, but months of sorrow;
> Other diseases often come to grieve us,
> Death strikes but once, and that stroke doth relieve us."

Your child has had that one stroke and has been relieved from all these pains, and you

may say of it, this much we know, he is supremely blessed, has escaped from sin, and care, and woe, and with the Saviour rests. "Happy the babe," says Hervey, "who,

> Privileged by faith, a shorter labor and a lighter weight,
> Received but yesterday the gift of breath,
> Ordered to-morrow to return to death."

While another says, looking upward to the skies, —

> "O blest exchange, O envied lot,
> Without a conflict crowned,
> Stranger to pain, in pleasure bless'd,
> And, without fame, renowned."

So is it. It is well to fight and win, but to win as fairly without the fight! It is well to sing the song of triumph after we have passed the Red Sea with all its terrors; but to sing the song without the sea is more glorious still! I do not know that I would prefer the lot of a child in heaven myself. I think it is nobler to have borne the storm, and to have struggled against the wind and the rain. I think it will be a subject of congratulation through eternity, for you and me, that we did not come so easy a way to heaven, for it is only a pin's prick after all, this mortal life; then there is exceeding great glory hereafter. But yet I think we may still thank God for those little ones, that

they have been spared our sins, and spared our infirmities, and spared our pains, and are entered into the rest above. Thus saith the Lord unto thee, O Rachel, if thou weepest for thy children, and refusest to be comforted because they are not: "Refrain thy voice from weeping, and thine eyes from tears: for thy work shall be rewarded, saith the Lord; and they shall come again from the land of the enemy."

The next and perhaps more useful and profitable inference to be drawn from the text is this: many of you are parents who have children in heaven. Is it not a desirable thing that you should go there too? And yet have I not in these galleries and in this area some, perhaps many, who have no hope for hereafter? In fact, you have left that which is beyond the grave to be thought of another day, you have given all your time and thoughts to the short, brief, and unsatisfactory pursuits of mortal life. Mother, unconverted mother, from the battlements of heaven your child beckons you to Paradise. Father, ungodly, impenitent father, the little eyes that once looked joyously on you, look down upon you now, and the lips which had scarcely learned to call you father, ere they were sealed by the silence of death, may be heard as with a still small voice, saying to you this morning, "Father, must we be for

ever divided by the great gulf which no man can pass?" Doth not nature itself put a kind of longing in your soul that you may be bound in the bundle of life with your own children? Then stop and think. As you are at present, you cannot hope for that; for your way is sinful, you have forgotten Christ, you have not repented of sin, you have loved the wages of iniquity. I pray thee go to thy chamber this morning, and think of thyself as being driven from thy little ones, banished for ever from the presence of God, cast "where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched." If thou wilt think of these matters, perhaps the heart will begin to move, and the eyes may begin to flow, and then may the Holy Spirit put before thine eyes the cross of the Saviour, the holy child Jesus! And remember, if thou wilt turn thine eye to Him thou shalt live; if thou believest on Him with all thy heart thou shalt be with him where He is, — with all those whom the Father gave Him who have gone before. Thou needest not to be shut out. Wilt thou sign thine own doom, and write thine own death warrant? Neglect not this great salvation, but may the grace of God work with thee to make thee seek, for thou shalt find — to make thee knock, for the door shall be opened — to make thee ask, for he that

asketh shall receive! Oh, might I take you by the hand, — perhaps you have come from a newly-made grave, or left the child at home dead, and God has made me a messenger to you this morning, — oh, might I take you by the hand and say, "We cannot bring him back again, the spirit is gone beyond recall, but you may follow"! Behold the ladder of light before you! The first step upon it is repentance, out of thyself; the next step is faith, into Christ, and when thou art there, thou art fairly and safely on thy way, and ere long thou shalt be received at heaven's gates by those very little ones who have gone before, that they may come to welcome thee when thou shouldst land upon the eternal shores.

A MOTHER CONGRATULATED ON THE DEATH OF HER CHILD.

[The following letter occurs in "Selections from the Correspondence of R. E. H. Greyson, Esq.," edited by Professor Henry Rodgers, the eminent author of "The Eclipse of Faith:"—]

LONDON, 1839.

MY SWEET COUSIN, — I have in vain tried to tell a lie for your sake, and say, — I *condole* with you.

But it is impossible. How *can* I, with my

deep convictions that your little floweret, and every other so fading, is but transplanted into the more congenial soil of Paradise, and shall there bloom and be fragrant for ever? How can I lament for one who has so cheaply become an "heir of immortality"? who will never remember his native home of earth, nor the transient pang by which he was born into heaven! who will never even know that he has suffered except by being told so! Shall we lament that he has *not* shared our fatal privilege of an experience of guilt and sorrow? Is this so precious that we can wish him partaker of it? My cousin, those who die in childhood are to be envied and felicitated, not deplored; so soon, so happily have they escaped all that *we* must wish never to have known.

> "Innocent souls, thus set so early free
> From sin, and sorrow, and mortality,"

who can weep for *them*, as he thinks of the fearful hazards that all must run who have grown up to a personal acquaintance with sin and misery?

An ancient Greek historian tells us it was a custom among a people of Scythia to celebrate the birth of a child with the same mournful solemnities with which the rest of the world celebrate a funeral. So intensely dark, yet so true (apart from the gospel), was the view

they took of what awaits man in life! The custom was fully justified, in my judgment, by a heathen view of things; and if it would be unseemly among us, it is only because Christianity has brought "life and immortality to light," and assures us that this world may become, for all of us, the vestibule of a better.

"You are very philosophical," you will say: "You talk very fine, but you do not feel as you talk." Excuse me, my dear; I talk just as I have always felt ever since I came to a knowledge of Christianity and of human life; and often — yes, often in the course of my own (and let the thought be consolation to you, for how do you know that your little one might not have tasted the same bitter experience?) — often in the course of my life, as I have looked back and seen how much of it has been blurred and wasted; what perils I have run of spiritual shipwreck; what clouds of doubt still often descend and envelop the soul; what agonies of sorrow I have passed through, — often have I cried, with hands smiting each other and a broken voice, "Oh that I had been thus privileged early to depart!" — But you cannot imagine a mother echoing such feelings in relation to her own child! Can you not? Come let us see.

There was once a mother, kneeling by the

bedside of the little one whom she hourly expected to lose. With what eyes of passionate love had she watched every change in that beautiful face! How had her eyes pierced the heart of the physician, at his last visit, when they glared rather than asked the question whether there yet was hope! How had she wearied heaven with vows that if it would but grant — "Ah!" you say, "you can imagine all that without any difficulty at all."

Imagine this, too. Overwearied with watching, she fell into a doze beside the couch of her infant, and she dreamt in a few moments (as we are wont to do) the seeming history of long years. She thought she heard a voice from heaven say to her, as to Hezekiah, "I have seen thy tears, I have heard thy prayers; he shall live; and yourself shall have the roll of his history presented to you." "Ah!" you say, "you can imagine all *that*, too."

And straightway she thought she saw her sweet child in the bloom of health, innocent and playful as her fond heart could wish. Yet a little while, and she saw him in the flush of opening youth; beautiful as ever, but beautiful as a young panther, from whose eyes wild flashes and fitful passion ever and anon gleamed; and she thought how beautiful he looked, even in those moods, for she was a

mother. Bnt she also thought how many tears and sorrows may be needful to temper or quench those fires!

And she seemed to follow him through a rapid succession of scenes, now of troubled sunshine, now of deep gathering gloom. His sorrows were all of the common lot, but involved a sum of agony far greater than that which *she* would have felt from his early loss; yes, greater even to her, and how much greater to him! She saw him more than once wrestling with pangs more agonizing than those which now threatened his infancy; she saw him involved in error, and with difficulty extricating himself; betrayed into youthful sins, and repenting with scalding tears; she saw him half ruined by transient prosperity, and scourged into tardy wisdom only by long adversity; she saw him worn and haggard with care, his spirit crushed, and his early beauty all wan and blasted; worse still, she saw him *thrice* stricken with that very shaft which she had so dreaded to feel but once, and mourned to think that her prayers had prevailed to prevent her own sorrows only to multiply his; worst of all, she saw him, as she thought, in a darkened chamber, kneeling beside a coffin in which Youth and Beauty slept their last sleep; and, as it seemed, her own image stood

beside him, and uttered unheeded love to a sorrow that "refused to be comforted;" and as she gazed on that face of stony despair, she seemed to hear a voice which said, "If thou *wilt* have thy floweret of earth unfold on earth, thou must not wonder at bleak winters and inclement skies. *I* would have transplanted it to a more genial clime; but thou wouldest not." And with a cry of terror she awoke.

She turned to the sleeping figure before her, and, sobbing, *hoped* it was sleeping its last sleep. She listened for his breathing, she heard none; she lifted the taper to his lips, the flame wavered not; he had, indeed, passed away while she dreamed that he lived; and she rose from her knees, — and was COMFORTED.

"Ah!" you will say, "these sorrows could *never* have been the lot of *my* sweet child!" It is hard to set one's logic against a mother's love; I can only remind you, my dear cousin, that it has been the lot of thousands, whose mothers, as their little ones crowed and laughed in their arms in childish happiness, would have sworn to the same impossibility. But for *you*, — you *know* what they could only believe; — that it *is* an impossibility. Nay, I might hint at yet profounder consolation, if, indeed, there ever existed a mother who could fancy that,

in the case of her *own* child, it could ever be needed. Yet *facts* sufficiently show us, that what the dreaming mother saw, — errors retrieved, sins committed but repented of, and sorrows that taught wisdom, are not always seen, and that children may, in spite of all, persist in exploring the path of evil, "deeper and deeper still." With the shadow of uncertainty whether it may not be so with any child, is there no consolation in thinking that even that shadow has passed away? For aught we know, many and many a mother may hereafter hear her lost darling say: "Sweet mother, I was taken from you for a *little* while, only that I might abide with you for ever!"

Ever yours affectionately,

R. E. H. G.

CHILDREN "GOD'S HERITAGE."

Rev. Henry Allon, Islington, London.

What a beautiful form of life is childhood! Its pure and tender physical beauty is but a faint emblem of its intellectual and moral conditions. Its very imperfections — its helplessness and ignorance — constitute its exquisite

charm; the roughest men confess it, the most sorrowful women are soothed by it, guilt feels a kind of awe at it, and vice is softened and purified by it; it inspires ambition with regrets, it melts impenitence to tears. A child is God's angel on earth—fresh, as it were, from his presence, and full of divine ministries—softening, humanizing, and sanctifying. It is a link that connects the busy life of this world with the solemn and mysterious world of spirits.

What a blessed and beautiful order of being it is! Suppose that human life had no childhood,—that men entered the world in the full power, and roughness, and unsanctity of adult manhood,—how hard and untractable a thing life would be! how destitute of the experiences that preciously teach it, of the influences that beneficially mould it! How inestimable the experiences and processes whereby we pass from helplessness, and ignorance, and innocence, to strength, and knowledge, and holiness! Bad as we may be, we should be a thousand times worse, destitute of the memories and experiences of childhood. Very precious, therefore, is God's gift of children. They are special means of grace to us, special ministers of spiritual thought and things. A wonderful Bible for a parent to read is a little child, a wonderful spiritual influence

for a parent to feel, almost an incarnation of the Holy Spirit himself. Even the recollections of childhood — of its purity, freedom, and blessedness — will break in upon the hardened spirit of a guilty man, and he will weep in very sadness over the memory of what he once was. The providence of God repeats, as it were, our own childhood in that of our children, — our own experience is reproduced in theirs. Children teach parents more, perhaps, than parents teach children; in a thousand ways they bring down heavenly thoughts and things upon the parents' hearts. Who can take a child up into his arms and look into its pure face, and into the transparent depths of its guileless soul, and see its freedom from care, suspicion, and sin, without deep and manifold thoughts and feelings concerning the soul, and God, and the possibilities of life. A child comes to us as if direct from God himself; it lives in our homes long before the fair picture and lesson of innocence is blurred and effaced by sin. No ministry so appeals to human hearts.

"Heaven lies about us in our infancy."

We muse and wonder as we look upon a child's face, until it grows almost divine, and we are half "afraid to look upon God."

God's gift of children is intended only for blessing,—a blessing to pious love and faith; they are a "heritage," a possession bestowed by the heavenly Father's love, and intended to stand in rich spiritual succession to us. They are more than spiritual beings, they are heirs of our spiritual privilege and piety; our pious parentage is, by God's blessing, to secure their piety. It is a privilege which, in the natural order of things, should be a blessing to them; it is a plea of power which they may urge in prayer, "Truly I am thy servant, and the son of thine handmaid." "The promise is to us and to our children." If we be faithful to our "heritage," it will, as a rule and principle—admitting of exceptions, it is true—become the heritage of our children. The richest, the most precious, the most affluent of all gifts, is God's gift of children; beyond wealth, or art, or literature, or social friends, or even conjugal love, they enrich and bless a home.

It is only when we thus intelligently and articulately realize the manifold blessing of children, that we can intelligently speak of the sorrow of their loss. It is a great mystery—one of the greatest mysteries of life—that so much young life should just bud and perish. It is the law of all life that there are more fallen blossoms than ripened fruit; but when children

die it is a sorrow as well as a loss. The pangs of birth, the unconsciousness and helplessness of infancy, it may be a few months or years of bright and beautiful development; the vague eye brightening into intelligent recognition, the vague feebleness strengthening into purposed activity, the vague instinct ripening into a pure and clinging love, health and beauty growing day by day; and then the sudden smiting down, the ruthless quenching of that beautiful spark of life, and it is as if "made in vain." It is true that the entrustment has been but short; there has been but little time for mere possession to grow into endearment; but strong passionate parental instinct does in days that for which other possessions years are required, and the death of a child is often a deep wound that almost breaks the heart that it lacerates, the scar of which is ever after tender to every touch and palpable to every eye.

But we may not think that because so early taken, children have been given in vain. How it would change the whole economy of life if children never died; if every life that was begun grew up to an assured maturity! What an exceptional and, in a thousand ways, harmful law of life it would be! And is there not more than fancy in the thought and the comfort

that there are children in heaven as well as on earth? If earth would lose, were only adult life upon it, would not heaven lose also? Will they not be in heaven, as on earth, part of the softening, sanctifying, endearing agency whereby we are ever advancing to perfection?

And is not a parent, is not a family infinitely better for even the transitory presence of a child in it? Have not deep springs of various moral feelings been touched? have not our hearts pondered many things as we have watched it sleeping, or nursed it waking? has it not been, as no other gift could have been, a medium through which God's voice has spoken to us? has not the hardest of us been softened to tears, the most irreligious of us thrilled into prayer? while, in the pious, almost every religious principle and emotion has been appealed to more powerfully than by any other thing. Were the child to live, the feeling might be superseded, the impression effaced, by its after developments. It would become a man. Its death deepens and perpetuates them. After years are passed it is still and must be ever to us *a child;* and all the tender, holy feelings that it appealed to are fresh and vivid.

In many senses Christ says to us, "Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of heaven."

If destined to adult life on earth, they are to be of His kingdom in childhood, and to retain the heart of childhood, even to old age. But we may "live in an inverted order." Parents may close the dying eyes of their children; their little footsteps may precede ours through the dark valley; our faith may have to put them into the arms of Jesus, we being forbidden to go with them; and our fond, blind love may hesitate, so that He may have to say to us, "Suffer them, suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not." He may have need of them for the enrichment, with child-life and child-beauty, of the Father's house which He has gone to "prepare." We know not wherefore He calls this or that particular child; and if it be ours that He calls, we may refuse to be comforted; we may cry with a great and bitter cry, "Wherefore hast Thou given them in vain?" But do not let us forget that it is into Christ's arms that we put them, that it is He who "takes them up into His arms and blesses them." They are safer with Him than they could be with us. His love can do for them what our poor love cannot do. With our children in Christ's arms, we ourselves shall follow more willingly and eagerly. When our dying hour comes, and we have to commend our spirits into His hands, we shall remember

that they are the loving hands which received our children; that He has already taken to Himself, as it were, part of us; our children are "preferred before us;" and we hasten to Him who has received and blessed them, and to the Father's house which they gladden and enrich with their presence; and so shall we and the children which God gave us be for ever with the Lord.

THE CHARM OF CHILDHOOD.

REV. GEO. GILFILLAN, DUNDEE.

THE charm of childhood, — who has not felt it? — although it may not always be easy to analyze its elements. Some of them, however, are obvious enough, and are found in the young of all animals, and in all youthful things. The full-grown tree has much beauty, but more still belongs to the tender sapling, which the snow almost breaks as it descends upon it, and which seems so helpless, yet interesting, in its infancy. The full-blown rose is a gorgeous object, but sweeter still the rosebud, peering out timidly through its half-opened eye into the strange atmosphere of earth, and making you cry with the poet,

"Sweet flower, thou'rt opening on a world
Of sin and misery;
But this at least consoles my mind,
They cannot injure thee."

The river, mature in age, swelled by a hundred tributaries, arisen in flood, and raging in wrath from bank to brae, may be a sublime sight; but surely it is more attractive in its youth, when a narrow strip of green, amidst barren moors, is its only boundary, and one star reflected on it from the proud heavens, is its sole companion. You tremble at the eagle, swooping and screaming through the upper ether, with the lightning in his eye, and the lamb in his talons; but you love to look at the young eaglet, lying secure in its lofty eyrie, and expecting the arrival of its food-bearing father. The old sparrow is a thief, and, as such, detested; but the young sparrow is the favorite and pet of the child, herself a pet and a favorite. The sheep seems silly enough, while bleating in her pastures, and running away when no one pursueth; but how lovely and dear the lamb, suddenly appearing by her mother's side, as if dropped from one of the white spring clouds, or meekly following in her train, even though it be to slaughter and death! And so with the children of the human family. Coming out of the awful cloud of

darkness which enshrouds birth, they come out as stars. Taken out of earth's lowest parts, they shine forth as gems of the purest water, and the brightest colors. Bursting up, as it were, from the bowels of the world, they burst up as flowers of the sweetest fragrance and the most variegated hues. Purity, simplicity, instinct, and unconsciousness, compose at first the elements of a child's existence. There it lies, like a thing of heaven and eternity, amidst the bustle and care and evil of the world; nourished on smiles, turning, sweet satellite! round the orb of its mother's face; sending up aimless, but beautiful smiles of its own, both when awake and when asleep; and dreaming that "strangest of all things, an infant's dream." In what innocence it is wrapped, as if in swaddling-bands of snow! No envy wrinkles that smooth brow, no lust and no hatred lurk in that heart, no fury burns in that clear, mild eye: its only food is milk, and its only sin is tears. In what blessed ignorance it dwells! It knows not of God; but neither does it know of His many foes and rebellious creatures. It knows not of good; but neither does it know of evil. The alarm of war it never heard, the blood-spotted and tear-stained records of the sad history of humanity it never read, of the

folly, falsehood, cruelty, impiety, and madness which dwell in the heart and blacken the life of man, it is altogether unaware; and yonder spring rose-bud, first meeting the smile of the light, is not more unconscious of the rude realities of the world than that newly-budded babe. Beautiful all this; but there is a period a little farther on when the child becomes more interesting far; that is when the soul awakes within it, and the coming forth of the evening star from a mass of clouds is not so beautiful as the first awaking of immortal mind in a child's eye; and when the heart awakes within it, and its smiles are no longer undistinguishing and no longer aimless, but become deeper in their significance, while equally sincere; and the understanding awakes within it, and proceeds to ask questions which no philosophy and no theology have yet been able to resolve; and the power of speech awakes within it, and its tongue overflows with that artless but piercing prattle which is more delightful than the murmur of streams, than the bleat of lambs, or than the stir of wind-swept flowers; because, while equally unconscious and equally musical, it is full of articulation, of meaning, and of love.

THE EARLY REMOVAL OF CHILDREN A PROOF OF DIVINE GOODNESS.

REV. GEORGE C. HUTTON, PAISLEY.

THERE is a sinless grief. Jesus Himself could weep. The heart, no less than the flesh, must bleed when wounded, and some of its softest tendrils are torn when little ones are plucked away. Still, this most amiable sorrow, the sorrow of Rachel weeping for her children, may reach excess. It is possible to nurse it in morbid luxury or desperateness of spirit, to the stoppage of all duty. The moan may swell into the murmur, and the smarting soul, Jonah-like, think it well to be angry. Yet why should a living man complain? There *is* worse grief in Bochim. "I would rather," said a gray-haired sire, following his son of shame, "have carried him to the grave." To have buried Hophni and Phinehas when simple babes, would have cost less anguish to Eli, than to hear of their death at Aphek in the "blossom of their sins." Bitter as it was for David to lose the child of Bathsheba, it was bitterer far to part with evil Absalom. It is told of an artist that, once engaged on a painting of Innocence, he took for his model the face of a lovely child.

Long afterwards, being occupied on a companion picture of Guilt, he visited the dungeon of a noted felon in search of artistic hints, only to find his cherub-model of other years transformed into that dark-visaged convict. So it is: the cradle hides many unknown developments. Herod once smiled on the breast; Cain once played at the knees of Eve. If it could be said of some, Better they had not been born; it might be thought of others, Better they had early died.

Yes, mourning parent, let God alone. His time and ways are ever best. Even were your offspring to be all Samuels and Timothys in riper life, would it lessen the pang to part with them then? Did it so with Jacob mourning Joseph, or the woman of Nain lamenting her manly son? Or if you shrink when the pruning-knife removes the buds and blossoms, would you prefer that it should be applied to your faithful spouse, the earthly stem which is better than "ten sons"? Say not, "All these things are against me." Only "wait patiently for the Lord." "They shall not be ashamed that wait for Him." Your soul shall yet revive as disconsolate Jacob's did, when he saw Joseph's glory in Egypt. This is the furnace ordeal, and when God hath "tried" you, you shall "come forth as gold." "All things work

together for good to them that love Him." The Lord hath but sent the young ones on before, that you may more sweetly follow. Against you! No. But deem not the question strange, — Is there none to be thought of except yourself? Is the Great Father not entitled to recall His own, or has He only your feelings to consider? What of the interests of the child, — His, still more than yours? Look that there be not some touch of self in your too eager love. When you stooped over the couch of the little sufferer, you felt you could give a world to purchase only an hour of ease for the fevered frame. In the time of health you watched the budding morals of your mirthful boy and your gentle girl; you kept far from their ears the echo of impiety, and from their eyes the spectacle of pollution; you toiled and prayed for their weal and happiness. And do you now weep that your warmest wishes have been far exceeded? Would you, if you could, bring back the young immortals from the land where the inhabitant shall never say, I am sick, to this scene of aches and pangs; from the purity of Paradise to the infections of the earth; from the clime of immortality and "God's holy mountain," where "nothing shall hurt or destroy," to the howling wilderness, the Van-

ity-fair of temptations, and the valley of the shadow of death? "If ye loved me," said Jesus to His sorrowing followers, "ye would rejoice, because I said, I go unto the Father." In almost similar terms, might these young spirits correct your excessive sorrow. These precious ones have only now gone home. They were never so blessed in your embrace, as now in the hands of the Good Shepherd. You loved to see their happiness here, and sometimes feared to die lest they should fare ill in a cold world. That ground of anxiety is now removed, and you may die assured that they want no good thing. Their Guardian is He who "gathers the lambs with His arm, and carrieth them in His bosom." Too natural was the mistake of Martha and Mary, "Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died." Far otherwise does Jesus show His love; even by making death gain. "It is appointed unto men once to die." Some must precede, child or parent; and first started is first arrived. Grudge not the children their happy start. Think rather that they shall be waiting for you at the pearly gates; and that if their removal has saddened the hearth, it has gladdened the skies, adding an element to the bliss of heaven, and providing for you a store of parental enjoyments that shall never

fail, in the society of your early lost. "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."

BEREAVED PARENTS COMFORTED.

REV. WM. M. TAYLOR, M.A., LIVERPOOL.

BEREAVED parents, do not sorrow murmuringly and without hope when your children are taken from you in death, for in such a dispensation Jesus is only saying to you in another form what He said to His disciples long ago, "Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God." Their death is but their going to Him, for I have no doubt whatever of the salvation of infants. It is not indeed a doctrine distinctly revealed; but it may, I think, be inferred from many passages of Scripture, and from the whole character of the gospel itself. The very words which I have quoted, even if there were no others, warrant the conclusion that infants are received into that kingdom of God which stretches into eternity; and if this be so, wherefore should you be like Rachel "refusing to be comforted"?

Consider to whom they have gone. They have been taken to the arms of Jesus, and to the bright glory of the heavenly state. Nothing now can mar their felicity, or dim the lustre of their joy, or damp the ardor of their song; and could they speak to you from their abode of bliss, they would say to you, weep not for us, but weep for yourselves, that you are not here to share our happiness.

Consider from what they have been taken. They have been removed from earth, with its pains and privations, its sufferings and sorrows. Look back upon your own chequered histories, and tell me if yon can contemplate without a feeling of grief, the idea of your children passing through such trials as those which have met you in the world? Would you wish that their hearts should be wrung as yours have been, by the harshness of an unfeeling world, or by the ingratitude of those whom you have served? Nay, in view of the agony of this very bereavement, would you wish that a similar sorrow should be theirs? And yet does not their continuance in the world involve in it the endurance of all these things; and ought it not, therefore, to be a matter of thankfulness that they have reached heaven without having passed through the full bitterness of earth? Above all, can you contemplate the spiritual

dangers with which the world is environed, and not feel grateful that your little ones are now eternally safe from them? Think of the temptations that have beset you, and of the dreadful battles which you fought with them, and how near you were to being conquered by them, and let me ask if in this view you can feel otherwise than glad that they have gained the victory without the perils and hardships of the fight? Perhaps had they been exposed to these dangers they would have fallen before them; perhaps had they lived they would have grown up only to fill your hearts with sadness, and "to bring your gray hairs with sorrow to the grave;" but all this is now impossible, for they are safe with Jesus. It *is* hard to part with your children; indeed there can be no severer bereavement, unless it be the death of a husband or a wife. But, oh! remember the death of your child is not the heaviest calamity that could befall you, for "a living cross is heavier then a dead one."

Consider again for what they are taken. Perhaps you have been wandering away from Christ, and He has taken this way to bring you back. Perhaps you have been centring your heart too much on the earthly object, and He has taken it to Himself, that your treasure may be still in Him. Perhaps you have never

known Him, and He has taken this means of introducing Himself to you, coming to you as He did to His followers of old, over the very waves with which you are struggling, and saying, "It is I, be not afraid." Perhaps some other member of your family was to be led through this affliction to the Lord, and thus one little one was taken from you for a season, that another might abide with you for ever. And if this should be so, can you repine ?

Consider, finally, how this bereavement will appear when you come to lie upon your death-bed. I have seen mothers and fathers not a few at that solemn hour, but never one have I heard expressing anxiety for the little children who have gone before. The great concern, then, after their own eternal safety, has always been for those they were leaving behind. The Lord, thus, is afflicting thee now, that thy sorrow may be mitigated at the last. Think of all these things, mourning parents, and then your bereavement will seem to be, as it in reality is, a token of love and not of anger.

"Oh, not in cruelty, not in wrath,
The Reaper came that day;
'Twas an angel visited the green earth,
And took the flowers away."

GRIEF NOT FORGOTTEN.

Rev. William Blair, M.A., Dunblane.

When God sends grief to any of His children, He has a twofold purpose in view: to awaken thought in them at the time, and to lay up for them a store of instruction and profit for the future. The immediate effect of God's visitations to us by the death of dear babes is preparatory to the higher end and ultimate effect. *Grief*, as the word literally signifies, is *heaviness*, and therefore not "joyous." But the heaviness "must needs be" to create any thing like a real, deep impression in the soul. If adversity is to afford "sweet uses," the bitter must be tasted first. No permanent benefit will result from a superficial contact with sorrow. What the poet sings of "a little learning" is equally applicable to our experience of grief: we must "drink deep or taste not," if we would enjoy the outcome of genuine tribulation. It depends very much on the entertainment we give to impressions of sorrow, whether the future will bring a blessing back to our bosom. The world's way is to shut down grief as it shuts down the coffin lid on the dead, to let the waves of worldliness rush in as they do behind the keel that has

parted them asunder. In plain words, the world's remedy is oblivion, utter extinction of the sight or sound of the objects of buried affection and hope. Nor is that fatalistic way of submitting to sorrow as an inevitable necessity, as devotees beneath the wheels of inexorable destiny, one whit more Christian or childlike than the sullen forgetfulness of the worldling. The virtues of submission, of holy resignation to God's will, of softened and sanctified experience, will never grow on such wild olives. Very significant are Paul's words of warning, neither to "despise the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when we are rebuked of Him." Those who grow hard in the fire affect to "despise" grief as a thing unmanly, womanish, weak, and unworthy of being cherished in the memory or the heart. And, to some extent they are right, when we analyze the kind of grief they indulge.

It is grief as a *sentiment* that is weak and "shallow," not as a motive power in the soul. Let sentimental, sensational grief be unremembered, for it is no better than noisy laughter. It touches only the surface: it has no power to stir the depths of our nature. It weaves its *immortelles*, and hangs them around the tomb, and straightway forgets what manner of man it once was. But genuine, real grief is not

forgetful nor empty. It is a fruitful bough by a well whose branches run over the wall. It is a full rounded cluster wherein is the wine of life; "destroy it not, for there is a blessing in it." Keep alive the memory of your grief, the hallowed associations with which it is entwined, the nearness of your soul to God when heaven seemed let down to earth to take from you the best of earth to heaven, the reality of prayer then offered, and of the answer received, and the rapture of heavenly joy in which you walked when your home was "the valley of the shadow of death." Cherish the memory, freshen the sense you have of your grief, not to throw shadows athwart your pathway, but to brighten it with light from heaven. Visit in thought the chamber where the strife of death was waged, and the churchyard corner where you deposited the precious dust, and think of the transfiguration, now that the decease has been accomplished, and the new link to bind your heart to the unseen, and the grand re-union coming nearer every day, and then the untold happiness not of "months in the New Jerusalem," but of "for ever with the Lord," and with all you have loved and lost, but found again when you shall be found of Christ at His coming.

Lord Monboddo lost a beloved daughter,

and grieved after a worldly sort over her. Her picture on the wall only reminded him of his misery. A friend drew a curtain over that picture: upon which the sad father said, "That is kind: come now, and let us read Herodotus." Miserable comforter, that romancing father of Greek history to a grieving father! Seek not so to bury your sorrow. "Go and tell Jesus," as John's disciples did when their master was taken away. That is the way to get your grief assuaged, to have it transfigured so that the *carte* in the album, or the bust on the wall, or the head-stone at the grave, will bring no shade of gloom around your brow; but each remembrancer of your little one may prove a beckoning light up through the darkness to the light that is inaccessible and full of glory. That is the way to get the breach healed. It may be that in the first outburst of your sorrow, when your sons and daughters rose up to comfort you, you put aside their ministry of consolation, and, like Jacob, said, "I will go down into the grave unto my son mourning." But, in the end of the days when parting words are spoken, Benoni, the son of sorrow, has become Benjamin, the son of my right hand, and the crowning benediction rests on the head of him that was separate from his brethren. Then,

in the light of Heaven, every shadow of earth's darkness will flee away, every Gethsemane become an Olivet, every step in the vale of tears a step in your ascension to the everlasting Kingdom.

ARE THERE INFANTS IN HEAVEN?

REV. DR. J. LOGAN AIKMAN, GLASGOW.

Do deceased infants *remain* infants in heaven? It is surely worse than trifling with scripture to make the phrase, "small and great," place infants, *as such*, before the judgment-throne. To talk of the lisping lips and pattering feet of children on the floor of heaven is truly painful. Had these infants lived to riper years, some of them might have loved and served Christ, and gone from manhood's prime to fill lofty thrones. Can any sense of privation flow from God's removal of them into His own glorious presence? Can they be inferior in heaven to what they might have become upon the earth?

The idea of continued infancy carries in it the thought of privation. Some would assure mourning mothers of having their beloved *infants* restored to their fond embrace. Do they seriously reflect upon what they say?

Were distance, and not death, the form of separation, they would be justly viewed as "miserable comforters." Tell a mother, parting from her child because of climate, that she will again receive him, ten or twenty years hence, in *precisely the same* condition. Would she not resent it as an insult thus to dwarf her noble boy, and imprison him for years in an infant's frame? Surely the same reasoning applies to death as to distance, and equally to heaven and earth. Our whole nature, instinctively, appeals to the law of progress as the law of life. To contemplate eternal infancy in heaven is to think of ignorance in the land of vision, of weakness in the scene of power, and of imprisoned faculties in the presence of the glorified Redeemer.

When infants rise to heaven they are subject to the law of life, and advance in the development of their being at a pace unknown on earth. When we ask the mother to look beyond her own loss to her child's gain, we think of that sainted spirit as rising more rapidly to manhood's fulness, and heaven's excellence, than if he had lived on earth. How can an intelligent mother ever become reconciled to her personal loss, or even rise above the thought of her child's loss, if, as she sees the remaining members of her family

increase in stature, knowledge, and wisdom, she must needs think of the brightest and best of them, whom God has sainted, as retained in perpetual infancy? Much as that mother marvels at, and rejoices over the dawning and advancing intelligence of her little circle, one glimpse of her sainted boy should convince her that a few short years in heaven have done more for him, than a long and well-spent life can possibly do for them.

Yet what wonderful compensation in the Divine economy! Ripe Christians must begin their heaven on a loftier platform, and progress at a quicker pace in the ever-upward march towards perfection, than those who have all to learn after they have entered upon glory. Looking from the earthward side of life we say — happy souls, translated to heaven, in blessed unconsciousness of sin and sorrow! Looking from the heavenward side we exclaim, Blessed ye, who lived and served on earth, to have your manifold labors recited and rewarded by the Saviour-Judge! We may speculate on the comparative advantages of early and later removals, — of infancy with its unconsciousness of sin, and its feebler spiritual life, and of manhood with its large experience and greater power of progress within the one kingdom, — but ever to fall

back for comfort upon the all-wise God, and in adoring gratitude to say unto Him, "Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in Thy sight."

The law of development is the law of life, alike on earth and in heaven. Exercise expands and invigorates the faculties. Enlarged capacities demand an ever-widening sphere of action. Why restrict to manhood and not extend to infancy the gracious provisions of that Divine law? Why not stereotype exhausted age as well as unfledged infancy? Must these germs of activity never rise into action? Shall the blossom never ripen into fruit? Can the noble faculties of mind and heart find an everlasting prison in the bosom of infancy? Must that child carry in him all the elements, and yet never reach the stature of a perfected manhood? To ask these questions is to answer them, and so as to affirm that man's loftiest hopes fall far short of God's glorious fulfilment.

The very thought of heaven suggests the absence of all imperfection, — the non-appearance of feeble infancy and time-worn age, the universal manifestation of manhood in immortal beauty and strength. The finished work of Christ demands a complete humanity; and man is still seriously incomplete in childhood. Soon the infant in heaven rises out of

his infancy, and attains to a knowledge, wisdom, and spirituality, greater far than if he had lived and loved Christ for a hundred years upon the earth.

Great, however, as the progress may be prior to the resurrection of the body, and fully as entrance into heaven must compensate for an early removal from earth, let it be remembered that the spirit in heaven is not humanity perfected. The body must needs be raised, and in a form adapting it for union and partnership with the glorified soul, ere heaven can be enjoyed in its fulness. The recovery of the *entire* man into the likeness of Christ is the finishing of the work of redemption, and must be the introduction of ransomed and perfected humanity into the *fulness* of promised and prepared glories.

When musing sadly on the recent removal of our endeared Theodore from our family circle, narrowed so much by three beloved ones withdrawn before him, the tender and timely sympathy of a much loved friend whispered the precious sentence, "Christ's covenant with His Father, that He should have *all* the infant spirits for His kingdom, is our only satisfactory foundation." The comfort in these priceless words is affectionately offered to all bereaved and sorrowing parents.

ON THE DEATH OF CHILDREN.

Rev. J. P. Chown, Bradford.

Sometimes the child is taken, when God sees if it were spared it would engross too much of the parents' affections, it would be *idolized* instead of *loved*, would be in the place of the Saviour and heaven to the parents, and that would not be well either for them or the child. Sometimes the child is taken instead of the parent. Justice does not say, "Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee," but Mercy says, instead, "I will call the child, and that may arrest him in his course, and the shock may break the ties that bind him to sin." And so the child, who is ready for heaven, is taken; the parent, who must have been cast down to hell, is spared. Sometimes God sees that our affections are becoming too closely entwined around earthly objects, and He takes the child, that those affections may be drawn up to heaven with it; it needs a painful wrench to tear them away, and it is thus He snatches from us a present treasure, to lead us to seek after future and everlasting joys. And then we know they are not lost, — these dear departed children. The flower was given, and had just begun to bloom in its beauty and breathe its fragrance through your

dwelling, and now it is gone; but it is not withered, it is not stolen, it is not destroyed; the Lord of the garden has sent His messenger, and he has plucked it, and borne it up from the desert world, whose rude blasts chilled it, to the Paradise where it shall bud and bloom in the sunlight of heaven for ever. Remember, too, how many parents would have rejoiced if their flowers had been taken to Paradise, instead of being spared to be the poor wretched, withered, down-trodden things they are now, — rather weeds, indeed, than flowers, — or crushed, it may be, almost out of existence altogether. And think, also, that if our little ones were taken from heaven to earth, or even if it were from earth to an unknown place, or to a worse place, then we might grieve over it; but it is not so, if we have them not here we have them in heaven. About whomsoever we may have doubts over their departure, there is no room for doubt here; the Saviour who gathered them around Him upon earth, and blessed them, is gathering them around Him in heaven, and blessing them in a manner of which we can form no conception; and so they are there, dwelling in His presence, blessed in His smile, rich in His glory, and waiting to welcome those who shall follow them, to their portion of everlasting peace and joy.

"IT IS WELL."

REV. DR. JOHN BRUCE, NEWMILNS, AYRSHIRE.

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SURELY it should not require many words to persuade bereaved Christian parents, that with their children also "it is well." They may think on the object of their tenderest affection as for ever withdrawn from them, and laid in the dreary, desolating grave. The blank produced in their family circle, with its mournful associations, may ever and anon obtrude itself on their view. And when they reflect on the days when the candle of the Lord shone upon them, and when all was cheerful in the midst of their dwellings, they may be overpowered and overwhelmed, and for a time may even "refuse to be comforted." But, by and by, the tumult of the soul is allayed; by and by the precious promises are attended to; by and by the Spirit, with its consoling influences, gets access to the mind, and then the bereaved and sorrowing parent can look at the bright side of the dispensation, and can say, It is well. Musing on God's ways towards him, he may be supposed to indulge in such thoughts as these, — He was indeed a pleasant child that was removed from me, and one on whom my heart was set. I had fondly hoped to see him grow in strength and beauty, and to be usefully and

honorably active in life. I had anticipated the period when he should be my companion, my counsellor, my comforter, my pride. But God in His sovereignty has ordered it otherwise; and shall I complain? Shall I complain because, in a different way from that which my own imaginings had pictured, my highest wish for my child is fulfilled? Shall I complain because the warfare has been so short, and the victory so easily and speedily won? because the lamb has been so soon gathered into the fold, and sheltered from the rough and ruthless blast? because the little voyager on life's wide ocean has escaped so completely the perils of life, and has entered so soon the peaceful haven? because the immortal spirit, the heir of heaven, lingered for so short a time in this land of darkness, and passed so soon into the realms of light? Shall I complain for these and similar reasons? Verily, No. Fond nature, cease thy unwarrantable murmuring. Look to thy child in his glorified state; "for of such is the kingdom of heaven." Think of him as raised above all sorrow, and suffering, and imperfection, and mingling with the innumerable company of the redeemed.

"Forgive, blest shade, the tributary tear,
That mourns thine exit from a world like this:
Forgive the wish that would have kept thee here,
And stay'd thy progress to the realms of bliss."

GOD'S RELATIONSHIP TO CHILDREN.

Rev. John Guthrie, A.M., Glasgow.

Our Father in Heaven, the infinite Parent of us all, and the Saviour, who did what no parent has done, — shed His blood to redeem them, — have a closer relation to our children, and a better right to them, than we. Be it the endeavor, then, of mourning parents to exclaim with the bereft patriarch, and as much as possible in that patriarch's spirit and power, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." Yea, let them overflow with hallelujahs, that, in the Atonement of Jesus, they have such an impregnable ground of hope in respect to their deceased children. The fact that these children are in heaven, among the shining throng, white-robed, and vocal with the praises of redeeming love, should endear Jesus to them the more, through the ransom of whose precious blood their darlings are now in an infinitely happier than the parental home. This will help you, desolate parent, better to appreciate and realize the claims of that bright world to which they have been summoned. You know not what use God may have for them there. Who knows to what glorious account

Jesus, even now while you weep, may there be turning their little radiant spirits? He has the ripened spirits there of "just men made perfect;" and with these He gems and jewels His crown of many stars. But He has also use there for the infant spirit in its loveliness. If the ripened saints are the stars that grace His crown, He whose delight is to take the lambs into His arms may well cull also the buds and flowerets of childhood to cluster as a garland round His bosom of love. Your children's precious dust is at present in the hands of the enemy; but that enemy, — "the last enemy," — shall be destroyed, and you and the tender objects of your regret, if you are only faithful to that Saviour whose blood has saved them, and persevere in the faith and love of Him to the end, will meet again ere long, triumphant over death, the grim foe that has despoiled you, and spend a long and happy Forever in the presence of your Lord.

We would say, in conclusion, to the bereft parent, through whose heart grief has driven its rude ploughshare, and whose wounds, it may be, are yet green, "Mourn not as those who have no hope," for, as respects your children, "there is hope in their end." In their material part only, they are, like Rachel's of old, "in the land of the enemy:" their nobler part is in the

land, and in the embrace, of the Infinite Friend. Nor is that Friend forgetful of their sleeping dust. It is precious in His sight. "The redemption of the body" is as sure as "the redemption of the soul." That enemy, "the last enemy," shall one day be destroyed; and on that eventful day, "your children shall come again." Only see to it, *now*, like David, that you will, by faith, "go to them," and Jesus will see to it *then* that they shall "come to you." "Thus saith the Lord; refrain thy voice from weeping and thine eyes from tears; for thy work shall be rewarded, saith the Lord; and they shall come again from the land of the enemy." What a rapturous prospect for the Christian parent!

THE CHILDREN SAFELY FOLDED.

REV. DR. JOSEPH BROWN, GLASGOW.

I HAVE a full persuasion in my own mind that "it is well with the child" that dies in infancy; and I have often felt thankful that I had satisfied myself on that head before I was led to secure the possession of a burying place for my own infant children; but my faith rests less on any particular passage than on the genius of the gospel scheme. Just as I find

that the divinity of our Lord is the key to the interpretation of the current representation of Scripture, so I think that the salvation of infant children is in best accordance with many portions of the holy oracles.

I had occasion to glance at the subject of infant salvation recently, when speaking of Christ's being "glorified in" the *number* of "His saints in that day," and in endeavoring to establish the position that the redeemed will greatly outnumber those that perish. I believe that even in past times the number of the saints may have been greater than a contracted charity has supposed, than the spirit of bigotry has allowed. I believe that, in the long ages of rest and triumph in store for the Church, "the nations of the saved" will soon counterbalance the deficiencies of many generations. And even in reference to those periods in which sin and Satan have most prevailed, I comfort myself with the thought that death has been employed by Him who has the power of the keys, in securing a great ingathering into the kingdom of heaven, from those who have died in infancy.

I remember conversing, many years ago, on this subject, with the late Ebenezer Brown, of Inverkeithing, and of marking the delight he seemed to gather from the thought that the

multitudes of children who die in heathen countries, and in the heathen parts of our own country, ay, and even those that are violently taken away by the cruel hands of superstition and idolatry, are "caught up to God and to His throne," to swell the numbers of the ransomed, and to enlarge the honors of the Redeemer.

LITTLE ONES IN HEAVEN.

REV. DR ROBERT FERGUSON, LONDON.

WE are not forbidden to mourn over the loss of those who have been taken from us; but our sorrow should be moderated by the reflection that our loss is their gain. The joy which was felt, and whose expression could not be repressed at the birth of the child, is surely not to become extinct in the event of his departure and introduction to a nobler state of being. Are all those delightful emotions which took possession of our breasts when he began to develop his intellectual power, or his spiritual life, to die out when that very same child is taken up into the society of perfected spirits, in whose midst his mental powers and his inner life will be revealed as they never could have been in this inferior state? Is it nothing that we have given birth to one who is now num-

bered with the sons of glory, and whose presence in heaven has widened the circle of the redeemed around the throne of God ? If death be a condition of life, then those whom we may have lost by death are not lost, but gone before. They are not dead, but live; and with the living only do they hold communion. If the highest type of created life be that of the redeemed and the glorified, then our joy ought to be proportioned to those higher conditions of being and of bliss to which they have been raised.

Christian parent! dry up thy tears; or if you must weep, make a rainbow of your tears. Let joy rise above grief as heaven rises above earth. If the birth of your child filled your breast with emotions which no human words can express, and if on his being born again you became the subjects of feelings yet more tender and peculiar, then think of him now amid the beatitudes and the blessedness of the heavenly world, sinless in character, deathless in life, exhaustless in energy, ceaseless in activity, and through the ages on ages, ever moving in the light of the throne, expatiating amid its unquenchable glories, and upholding communion with the Eternal Life.

How delightful the idea that some of our little ones are there, ever beholding the face of

their Father, reposing in His immutable love, and being filled with the fulness of joy! How cheering the thought that they have been admitted to the society and the fellowship of perfected spirits, are now the companions and associates of patriarchs, and prophets, and apostles, of martyrs and confessors, of the mightiest and the noblest dead, and hold the most intimate intercourse with them on all that is holy and true, unchangeably good and sublimely grand! How inspiring the belief, that they are now waiting our arrival, and are beckoning us onward and upward to join their wider circle, to enter with them on brighter scenes, and to enjoy life with them in its fulness and its fruitions! If we have ties on earth we have ties also in heaven. Nor let us forget that heaven is our home, as it is the home of those little ones now in glory. It is there that we are to meet them again, to be reunited in indissoluble bonds, and to dwell in endless life. Their very existence there is meant to charm our spirits up to their bright abode. Let us, then, set our affections on that higher world; let us yield to its attractive influence; and let us rejoice in this prospect of mingling for ever with our little ones and our loved ones in scenes of ineffable light and life, of glorious love and boundless joy.

MUTUAL RECOGNITION IN HEAVEN.

REV. DR. GEORGE SMITH, POPLAR, LONDON.

THE hope of reunion in a future state of being has been prevalent amongst devout and thoughtful persons in all ages of time, and under the various dispensations of divine truth which have passed over men. Some glimmerings of this expectation have visited communities and individuals unblest with the light of a written revelation, but who probably derived their impressions from traditionary recollections of a primitive faith. A definite and ever-brightening impression of the truth has been obtained under the Patriarchal, the Jewish, and the Christian economies. This hope has been a great comfort to mourners in seasons of bereavement. They have felt as did the monarch of Israel, who when lamenting the decease of his child, encouraged his heart by uttering the well-known words, "I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me." . . .

By many of those who receive the kingdom of God as little children, this consoling doctrine is admitted without gainsaying, and is almost intuitively perceived. Not very long since, an aged disciple, a highly valued relative of mine, fell asleep in Jesus at the advanced age of

eighty-one years. On hearing of the event, his sister, more aged than he, said, "How glad my dear mother will be to see her darling boy again!" When the tidings of death reached my home, a grandchild of the departed saint, my own youngest boy, Richard Morley, being then only in his fifth year, exclaimed, "How delighted grandmamma will be to see him again!" Thus youth and age, both taught of God, testified to a glorious truth. They have both since then passed into the world of light; the child after a few weeks only, and they are doubtless reunited to the loved ones of whom they believingly spoke.

This subject is adapted to comfort the orphan deprived of parental support, and cast on the fatherhood of God. It is equally suited to bind up the wounds of parents who mourn, like Rachel, over their children, because they are not. Nor is it less fitted to support the mind of others who are deprived of companions in labor, and sorrow, and joy. We can follow them by faith within the veil, and behold their ever increasing happiness. We can listen to the voice of revelation, which assures us that they without us cannot be perfect; and we can look forward with hope to the time when, knowing as we are known, we shall rejoin them in the climes of bliss, and with them place the

crown of redemption at the feet of the Redeemer. With Richard Baxter, the eloquent discourser on "The Saint's Everlasting Rest," we may say, addressing the Captain of our salvation, —

> "As for my friends, they are not lost;
> The different vessels of Thy fleet
> Though parted now, by tempests tost,
> At length shall in the haven meet."

SAFE WITH CHRIST.

REV. CHARLES GARRETT, MANCHESTER.

OH, weeping, trembling mother, the Good Shepherd who carries the lambs in His bosom, looks pityingly upon you, and says in loving tones, "Can you not trust your child with *Me?*" Surely your heart, in the midst of its agony, will reply, "Yes, Lord, I can." You have often said to an earthly friend, "I have no fear nor anxiety about my child when it is with *you*." And if this be true, for it to be with *Christ* must be far better. Think of His unerring wisdom, His almighty power, His boundless resources, His unutterable tenderness, and, above all, His infinite love, and your faith will be strengthened and steadied. Remember that

He loves your sainted child as tenderly as if there were not another child in the universe, and, oh, how safe, how happy it must be with *Him!* Bear in mind, also, that the separation is only for a "little while," as little as is consistent with your eternal welfare. Your heavenly Father is far more anxious to have you in heaven than you are to get there. All the events of your life are working together for this end. You may not be able to see how this can be, but His eyes are clearer than yours. He sees the end from the beginning. If, therefore, you cannot *praise* Him for this "fiery trial," don't *murmur*, be "dumb, and open not your mouth," because He has done it. He will understand your silence. "He knoweth our frame; He remembereth that we are dust." His purposes will soon be accomplished, and then amidst the glories of heaven you will meet again; so shall you "obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away."

UNCONVERTED PARENTS ADMONISHED.

REV. PROFESSOR M'MICHAEL, D.D., DUNFERMLINE.

PERHAPS there is a danger, in themes of this description, of overlooking the case of mourning parents, who are themselves in an un-

sanctified state, and who are destitute of a saving faith in the Lord Jesus. This book may fall into their hands, and to them I would now address a word of kind and faithful expostulation. May it be abundantly blessed, through the Holy Spirit, to promote their eternal interests!

My supposition is, Death has entered your dwelling, and has snatched a loved one from your embrace. That child, I believe, is safe, — safe in heaven; but you yourselves are still living in sin and unbelief. What a monstrous contradiction is here! Your child in heaven, while you are on the broad road to hell! That child was dear, inexpressibly dear to you; but the Lord took him. Perhaps it was done for your spiritual benefit. Had it not been for this gracious purpose, he might have been still with you, cheering your heart. More frequently than is imagined, children become martyrs for the sake of their ungodly parents. For them they wither, and for them they die. But has this divine visitation produced the effect which it ought to have done? Did you actually look upon your own child in the convulsions of death? did you place it in its little coffin, and lay its head in the grave, without a piercing consciousness of the evil of sin? There would have been nothing surprising,

though God had smitten *you* dead, and friends had been summoned to your funeral. Laden with sin, as all of us are who have arrived at mature years, that was just what might have been expected, and what would assuredly happen did not infinite mercy prevent. But did it never occur to you, how dreadful sin must appear in the sight of God, when even that young child of yours paid the awful penalty? The wages of sin is death. Did it never occur to you, that if there were nothing inconsistent in divine goodness and justice sending disease and death upon that little one, what must be your own condition, should you die impenitent and be summoned into the presence of the Judge with all your guilt upon your head? Did it never occur to you, what additional misery shall be yours in the place of perdition, when you remember there, that you have a darling child in heaven, and that had you profited by the lesson which its premature death was intended to teach, you might yourselves have been with it, and with the other glorified inhabitants, singing the high praises of our God? By the memory of that child so dear to you; by the value of your own immortal souls which are in danger of perishing; by the terrors of the day of judgment, when each one of us must give an account

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of himself unto God; and by the precious blood of Christ, which cleanseth from all sin, I beseech you now to repent and to accept the overtures of divine compassion. Mercy there is for you still, much as you have hitherto hardened your hearts and despised the chastisements of Jehovah. Flee, without delay, to the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls, and surrender yourselves freely unto Him. Then it will be in your power to say, with the bereaved Shunammite, "It is well;" and also to adopt the language of David, with reference to his dead son, "I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me."

A WORD IN SEASON.

Rev. Henry Batchelor, Glasgow.

You need not ask the Prophet's question, "Is it *well* with the *child?*" The "Good Shepherd" always carries the drooping lamb in His bosom, and the last breath is the token that it has reached the sacred and guarded fold, and that its spirit has found rest. Death to a little one is like liberating a bird to seek its native clime. Its unsoiled pinion and virgin song are for a sunnier realm. The light in

which it is lost to thee is the radiance of the better land. "For of *such* is the *kingdom of God.* But oh! parent, what of *thine own soul?* Hast thou one so near to thee, one that thou thoughtest inseparable from thy life and love, in heaven? Are the little feet touching the blissful shore that thou shalt never tread? Is its ear filled with sounds that shall never come to thine? Is its young and tender form lustrous with a glory which shall never shine on thee? Is it now looking on the face which thine eye, through all the eternal ages, shall never see?

Is thy little one *so much* to *thee*, and art *thou less* to *God?* "*We* are *His* offspring." The Great Teacher enjoined, "When ye pray, say, our *Father.*" Ye have a place in the paternal love of God. Thy burdens are His care. An imperilled soul is more to Him than all his vast dominions. He has taken to Himself the little life so precious to thee, to draw thee after. This is God's most loving act to thee. Many a time thou hast heard His voice, and didst not heed it. He gave His only-begotten Son to agony and death for thee, and it touched thee not; now, He has taken thine own loved one from thee. It is not the first time that a little golden head has attracted hoary hairs to heaven. Tiny pattering feet

trace for strong men the way to God, and lead, by silken cords of love, to His blest abode. "Out of the mouths of *babes and sucklings* Thou hast *perfected praise.*" May it be thy comfort that every step in life is guiding thee to embrace thy little one again, where flowers never wither, and immortality beams in every countenance.

APPEAL TO PARENTS.

REV. WILLIAM BATHGATE, KILMARNOCK.

CHRISTIAN parent, bereaved of an infant-child, one word of appeal to you. Sore was your heart in the sad hour which struck the departure, to another home and bosom, of your darling child. Though seasons may have come and gone, though years of vicissitude may have fled since you kissed for the last time the infant-clay in its snow-white dress, or heard the first clod fall relentlessly on the coffin which contained the pride of your heart, the tear still starts, and the lip still quivers, over the name and image of your beloved infant. Sorrow not for him. He stands on the other bank of the Jordan, ready to hail you as you rise from the troubled river. He tunes his

infantine harp to give you a gladsome welcome to the mansions above. Wish him not "back again," for the wish is unkind as well as vain. Comfort yourself with the assurance that you "shall go to him." Your child is not among strangers. The angels wait on him. The Saviour carries him in His bosom. Never was he so much at home. He has the blessed fortune to advance beneath the care and education of heaven. He is in the train of the blessed Saviour, for whose glorious appearing you daily look. Oh, let your affections be *fixed* on the heavenly world. The Great Spirit will not charge you with idolatry should you quicken your pace to glory because your departed child wearies for your coming. God smilingly looks on the reunion of sire and son.

Christless parent, bereaved of an infant-child, what shall we say to you? It is well even with the spirit of your little one. This is a gratifying, gladdening truth, even to a parent bound for a dread futurity. But, then, though you are welcome to all the consolation which such a truth is fitted to impart, does not the truth flash across your benighted soul a terrible suggestion? Oh, see you not that if you die Christless as you are living Christless, your little one and you shall never meet. Should it often watch for its mother's spirit emerging

with a song of victory from the billows of the Jordan, it shall watch in vain. Should it on the morning of judgment recognize its mother's face and hold aloft its tiny hands, it shall hold them up in vain. Ah! bereaved mother, you have drunk the bitterest of earth's cups. Death tore from you the idol of your heart. But, continue Christless, remain unsaved, and you will see your child rising in glory, while you yourself are sinking into hell. Can you stand *that prospect?* Take your infant's Saviour as your Saviour. Rend not the heart of the soul-loving and soul-saving Jesus by continuing unsaved, and constraining Him to bid you depart far from your child, and far from Himself.

A TRANSPLANTED FLOWER.

WM. B. BRADBURY.

KATIE is gone. Where? To heaven. An angel came and took her away. She was a lovely child,—gentle as a lamb; the pet of the whole family. The youngest of them all. But she could not stay with us any longer, she had an angel sister in heaven, who was waiting for her. The angel sister was with us only a few months, but she has been in heaven

many years, and she must have loved Katie, for everybody loved her. The loveliest flowers are often soonest plucked. If a little voice sweeter and more musical than others was heard, I knew Katie was near. If my study-door opened so gently and slyly that no sound could be heard, I knew that Katie was coming. If, after an hour's quiet play, a little shadow passed me, and the door opened and shut as no one else could open and shut it, "so as not to disturb papa," I knew Katie was going. When, in the midst of my composing, I heard a gentle voice saying, "Papa, may I stay with you a little while? I will be *very* still," I did not need to look off my work, to assure me that it was my little lamb. You stayed with me too long, Katie, dear, to leave me so suddenly; and you are *too still* now. You became my little assistant — *my home angel* — my youngest and sweetest singing-bird, and I miss the little voice that I have heard in the adjoining room, catching up and echoing little snatches of melody as they were being composed. I miss those soft and sweet kisses. I miss the little hand that was always first to be placed upon my forehead, to "drive away the pain." I miss the sound of those little feet upon the stairs. I miss the little knock at my bedroom door in the morning, and the triple

good-night kiss in the evening. I miss the sweet smiles from the sunniest of faces. I miss, — oh, how I miss the foremost in the little group who came out to meet me at the gate for the first kiss! I do not stoop so low now, Katie, to give that first kiss. I miss you at the table and at family worship. I miss your voice in "*I want to be an angel*," for nobody could sing it like you. I miss you in my rides and walks. I miss you in the garden. I miss you everywhere; but I will try not to miss you in heaven. "Papa, if we are good, will an angel truly come and take us to heaven when we die?" When the question was asked, how little did I think the angel was so near! But he did "truly" come, and the sweet flower is transplanted to a more genial clime. "I do wish papa would come." Wait a little while, Katie, and papa will come. The journey is not long. He will soon be "Home."

A SWEET SORROW.

REV. DR. SCHAFF.

Now, farewell, my precious boy! Till I see thee again, farewell! With a saddened heart have I performed the last act of earthly

love; and now I resign thee into the hands of higher and better parental care. Short was thy visit in this rough and tempestuous world! The heavenly gardener has early transplanted the fragrant lily of thy life into a milder and purer clime. Thy life was not yet darkened and imbittered by the fearful curse of sin and death. As a tender lamb of Christ, thou didst bear thy cross in friendly innocence, like the infants of Bethlehem, who were slain by the tyrant-sword of Herod, as the first martyr fruits offered to the new-born Saviour, to whom the ancient church has devoted the third day after Christmas as an anniversary-day of special remembrance. Thou art now happy with them, and with the pleasant angels, far away from the sultry and sickly atmosphere of earth and sin, in serene celestial heights, in the green peaceful bowers of Paradise, led, and fed, and refreshed by the Great Shepherd of the sheep and of the lambs, who was Himself once a child, that He might sanctify the tender age of infancy, and who, in the days of His flesh, pressed infants to His bosom, speaking those words of comfort: "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God." His thou wert by birth; and, as He formed thy beautiful body, so did He also, by His Holy Spirit, silently, and unconsciously to thee,

early prepare thy spirit for that holy world where now thou art at home. It was He that taught thee to lisp, as thou didst in the midst of thy suffering, with infant joy: "Heaven is a beautiful place: God is there, Christ is there, the angels are there, all good people are there!" Yes, my hopeful, pious boy! they are all there, old and young, great and small,—all who have overcome in the blood of the Lamb! There also dost thou bloom for ever, in the unfading beauty of the loveliest age! Thither also do thy parents, by God's grace, hope to arrive, when their hour shall strike, to embrace thee, the beloved of their hearts, in glorified youth, and to lose thee no more for ever! Oh, the joy of such a meeting!

"LITTLE EDWARD."

REV. EDWARD IRVING, LONDON.

WHOSO studieth as I have done, and reflecteth as I have sought to reflect, upon the first twelve months of a child; whoso hath had such a child to look and reflect upon, as the Lord for fifteen months did bless me withal (whom I would not recall, if a wish could recall him, from the enjoyment and service of our dear

Lord), will rather marvel how the growth of that wonderful creature, which put forth such a glorious bud of being, should come to be so cloaked by the flesh, cramped by the world, and cut short by Satan, as not to become a winged seraph; will rather wonder that such a puny, heartless, feeble thing as manhood should be the abortive fruit of the rich bud of childhood, than think that childhood is an imperfect promise and opening of the future man. And therefore it is that I grudged not our noble, lovely child, but rather do delight that such a seed should blossom and bear in the kindly and kindred Paradise of my God. And why should not I speak of thee, my Edward! seeing it was in the season of thy sickness and death the Lord did reveal in me the knowledge and hope and desire of His Son from heaven? Glorious exchange! He took my son to His own more fatherly bosom, and revealed in my bosom the sure expectation and faith of His own eternal Son! Dear season of my life! ever to be remembered, when I knew the sweetness and fruitfulness of such joy and sorrow.

The following is an extract from a letter to Mrs. Irving, when on his solitary journey homeward, over the moors, on foot, dated Annan, 18th October, 1825:—

Here I waded the Yarrow at the foot of the

loch, under the crescent moon, where, finding a convenient rock beneath some overhanging branches which moaned and sighed in the breeze, I sat me down, while the wind, sweeping, brought the waters of the loch to my feet; and I paid my devotions to the Lord in His own ample and magnificent temple; and sweet meditations were afforded me of thee, our babe, and our departed boy. My soul was filled with sweetness. "I did not ask for a sign," as Colonel Blackadder says; but when I looked up to the moon, as I came out from the ecclesia of the rock, she looked as never a moon had looked before in my eye, — as if she had been washed in dew, which, speedily clearing off, she looked so bright and beautiful; and, on the summit of the opposite hill, *a little bright star gleamed upon me, like the bright, bright eye of our darling.* Oh, how I wished you had been with me to partake the sweet solacement of that moment!

GERMS OF IMMORTALITY.

REV. DR. JOHN CUMMING, LONDON.

CHRISTIANITY alone looks with sympathy on infants, loves them more than angels, provides for their future state, and plants in the

sorrowing hearts of those who have lost them bright hopes of restored union and communion in glory. Christianity takes the infant close to her mother-bosom, spreads over it the warm wing of love, sprinkles on its bright brow waters from that river whose streams make glad the city of our God, and gives utterance to the deep sympathies of her heart in these words: "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of heaven." Babes are not too insignificant in her thoughts. Her Incarnate One controls the exalted hierarch beside the throne, and also stoops to teach and bless an orphan child. Never did He who spake as never man spake breathe a more beautiful or touching thought, or bequeath to mourning mothers bereaved of their infants a more precious legacy, than when He rebuked the stern frowns which His disciples cast on the mothers that crowded round Him with their babes, and took up the unconscious infants in His arms, and blessed them, and said, "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of heaven." Whosoever may undervalue these germs of immortality, these folded buds of promise, these tenants of earth in training for heaven, — the Son of God does not. He spreads over them

the shield of His power, and covers them with the feathers of His wing. He saw immortality beam from their countenances, in their bosoms His ear heard the beatings of a life that can never die; and capacities which all the treasures of time and earth cannot fill, disclosed themselves to the eye of Him to whom the most secret structure of mind and body is thoroughly unveiled. It is relation to eternity that makes the feeblest strong, and the smallest great.

THE BLACKSMITH AND HIS WIFE AT "WEE DAVIE'S" COFFIN.

REV. DR. NORMAN MACLEOD, GLASGOW.

THE little black coffin was brought to the smith's the night before the funeral. When the house was quiet, Davie was laid in it gently by his father. Jeanie stood by and assumed the duty of arranging with care the white garments in which her boy was dressed, wrapping them round him, and adjusting the head as if to sleep in her own bosom. She brushed once more the golden ringlets, and put the little hands in their right place, and opened out the frills in the cap, and removed

every particle of sawdust which soiled the shroud. When all was finished, though she seemed anxious to prolong the work, the lid was put on the coffin, but so as to leave the face uncovered. Both were as silent as their child. But ere they retired to rest for the night, they instinctively went to take another look. As they gazed in silence, side by side, the smith felt his hand gently seized by his wife. She played at first nervously with the fingers, until finding her own hand held by her husband, she looked into his face with an unutterable expression, and meeting his eyes so full of unobtrusive sorrow, she leant her head on his shoulder, and said, "Willie, this is my last look o' him on this side the grave. But, Willie dear, you and me maun see him again, and mind ye, no to pairt; na, I canna thole that! We ken whaur *he* is, and we maun gang till him. Noo promise me—vow alang wi' me here, that as we love him and ane anither, we'll attend mair to what's guid than we hae dune, that—O Willie! forgie me, for it's no my pairt to speak, but I canna help it enoo, and just, my bonnie man, just agree wi' me—that we'll gie our hearts noo and for ever to our ain Saviour, and the Saviour o' our wee Davie!" These words were uttered without ever lifting her

head from her husband's shoulder, and in low, broken accents, half choked with an inward struggle, but without a tear. She was encouraged to say this — for she had a timid awe for her husband — by the pressure ever and anon returned to hers from his hand. The smith spoke not, but bent his head over his wife, who felt his tears falling on her neck, as he whispered, "Amen, Jeanie! so help me, God!" A silence ensued, during which Jeanie got, as she said, "a gude greet," for the first time, which took a weight off her heart. She then quietly kissed her child and turned away. Thornburn took the hand of his boy and said, "Farewell, Davie, and when you and me meet again, we'll baith, I tak' it, be a bit different frae what we are this nicht! He then put the lid on mechanically, turned one or two of the screws, and then sat down at the fireside to chat about the arangements of the funeral as on a matter of business.

After that, for the first time, William asked his wife to kneel down, and he would pray before they retired to rest. Poor fellow! he was sincere as ever man was; and never after till the day of his death did he omit this "exercise," which once a day was universal in every family whose head was a member of the church; and I have known it continued by

the widow when her head was taken away. But on this, the first night, when the smith tried to utter aloud the thoughts of his heart, he could only say, "Our Father — !" There he stopped. Something seemed to seize him, and to stop his utterance. Had he only known how much was in these words, he possibly might have said more. As it was, the thoughts of the father on earth so mingled, he knew not why, with those of the Father in heaven, that he could not speak. But he continued on his knees, and spoke there to God as if he had never spoken before. Jeanie did the same. After a while they both rose, and Jeanie said, "Thank ye, Willie; it's a beautifu' beginning, and it wull, I'm sure, hae a braw ending." "It's cauld iron, Jeanie, woman," said the smith, "but it wull melt and come a' richt."

THE FLOWERS OF PARADISE.

REV. DR. THOMAS GUTHRIE, EDINBURGH.

HEAVEN is greatly made up of little children, — sweet buds that have never blown, or which Death has plucked from a mother's bosom to lay on his own cold breast, just when they were expanding, flower-like, from the

sheath, and opening their engaging beauties in the budding time and spring of life. "Of such is the kingdom of heaven." How soothing these words by the cradle of a dying infant! They fall like balm drops on our bleeding heart, when we watch the ebbing of that young life, as wave after wave breaks feebler, and the sinking breath gets lower and lower, till with a gentle sigh, and a passing quiver of the lip, our sweet child leaves its body lying like an angel asleep, and ascends to the beatitudes of heaven and the bosom of its God. Perhaps God does with His heavenly garden as we do with our own. He may chiefly stock it from the nurseries, and select for transplanting what is yet in its young and tender age, — flowers before they have bloomed, and trees ere they begin to bear.

THE INTELLIGENCE OF A GLORIFIED INFANT.

REV. DR. ALEXANDER FLETCHER, LONDON.

HAS it never struck you, my friend, the glorious change which is effected upon the mind of an infant, the moment its disembodied spirit is admitted among the holy and intelligent citizens of the new Jerusalem? I have often

thought of it with surprise and delight. In one instant, there is a greater influx, a greater communication of light into its glorified understanding, than all the accumulated light which glowed with splendor for many years, in the mind of the greatest philosopher, who has added lustre to his country, to his species, to the world. All the experienced Christians and divines whom that dear babe has left behind it, are as much behind it in the degree of their knowledge, and in the enlargement of their capacity, as they are behind it in place. Heaven does not exceed this world more in its grandeur and glory, than this glorified infant does the greatest, the wisest, and the best of human beings, living in this vale of tears. Oh, how much this should reconcile pious parents to the departure of their dear babes from a world of ignorance and of suffering, to a land of unclouded intelligence and unceasing enjoyment.

HEAVENLY RELATIONSHIP.

REV. P. B. POWER, M.A., KENT.

REMEMBER, poor mourner, that the child that hath left thy home hath found another home. Thy little one is not homeless: doth

not that thought in itself pour oil and balm upon thy heart? Think no more of the isolation and loneliness of the body's grave, but think of the companionship and joyousness of the spirit's home. Life, love, joy, warmth, all cluster themselves about the name of home: let them cluster in thy thoughts around thy child who is at home. Oh, what loving care and thought were spent upon thy little one! and oh, bitter grief! thou canst spend them now no more; the departed one is out of the reach of thy ministry; that thou canst no longer do any thing for it is part of thy bitter woe. But think!

> "Thy flower hath found a home with One,
> Who well its value knows."

A voice softer than thine whispers to it, hands more gentle than thine minister to it, eyes more loving than thine look upon it; if thou lovest as a parent should love, be content to be outdone; thou art conquered in life's strife only by beings of another world, and thy child reapeth the victory of thy defeat; thou wouldst have done much for it had it lived, they do more now that it is dead; thou wouldst have set great price upon it had it tarried with thee here, a price far greater still is set upon it by Him that has taken it to Himself.

THE FADED FLOWER.

REV. JOHN JAMESON, METHVEN, PERTHSHIRE.

So quickly, so lightly, and so placidly passed she, that ere we had the courage to think she was going, already she was not. With all the simplicity of an infant, she had said to her mother, the day before she fell ill, that she was going to die. Just as she was departing, she revived for a moment, gathered strength, and throwing one full look of kindness on her trembling parent, breathed her last. "That look," said her mother to me, "I can never forget; that look was all the portion she had to bequeath; and that look now lifts me up." There was something very fine in the scene. Little Johnnie, heedless of his own grief, — and he, too, had been crying bitterly, — when he beheld his mother weeping, sprung to her, clasped her in his arms, *clapped* her with all his gentleness, and kissed the tears from her cheeks.

This world of ours, my dear Mary, is just a green-house, where there are flowers of every standing. Those, generally, of a commoner and lowlier sort hang long, and from month to month, unfading still, deal out, with unchanging hue, their daily meed of fragrance,

—it may be, little felt and little noticed, but still they are there. Those, again, of grander flowering, with their bright and delicate and sparkling beauty, which rivets our gaze, soon, right soon, alas! fade away. There is a flower, they tell us, the most exquisite of all that blossoms, which blooms during night, as if day were too strong for the delicacy of its sweetness. In such haste is it to be gone, that in the self-same hour in which it opens and spreads its loveliness, it sheds it, and its leaf falls off. The gardener alone, curious and deeply interested, who has sat up and watched to see, has catched and felt the pleasure of the passing sight. Your little Maggie was such a flower. Why should we think it strange when the flower is faded? "The spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it." The flower has lived its own, its appointed time; and could tarry no longer, by no means. A child may cry when its lovely flower is gone; far otherwise the gardener himself,—he is satisfied, nay, is quite delighted, that ever such a flower was his.

A HEBREW STORY.

REV. ALEX. B. GROSART, BLACKBURN.

I GATHER up what I have submitted thus far, by telling an old Hebrew story. Rabbi Meir — so it runs — sat during the whole of one Sabbath-day in the public school, and instructed the people. During his absence from home, his two boys, both of them of uncommon beauty, died. His wife, their mother, bore them to her chamber, laid them upon the marriage-bed, and spread a white covering over their bodies. Towards evening, Rabbi Meir came home. "Where are my beloved sons," he asked, "that I may give them my blessing?" "They are gone to the school," was the answer. "I repeatedly looked round the school," he replied, "and I did not see them there." She reached him a goblet; he praised the Lord at the going out of the Sabbath, drank, and again asked, "Where are my boys, that they may drink of the cup of blessing?" "They will not be far off," she said, and placed food before him, that he might eat. He was in a gladsome and genial mood; and when he had said grace after the meal, she thus addressed him: "Rabbi, with thy permission I would fain propose to thee one

question." "Ask it then, my love!" he replied. "A few days ago, a person intrusted some jewels to my custody, and now he demands them again: should I give them back again?" "This is a question," said Rabbi Meir, "which my wife should not have thought it necessary to ask. What! wouldst thou hesitate or be reluctant to restore to every one his own?" "No," she replied, "but yet I thought it best not to restore them without acquainting thee therewith." She then led him to their chamber, and, stepping to the bed, took the white covering from their bodies. "Ah! my boys, my boys!" thus loudly lamented the father; "my boys! the light of mine eyes!" The mother turned away and wept. At length she took her husband by the hand, and said, "Rabbi, didst thou not teach me that we must not be reluctant to restore that which was intrusted to our keeping? See, the Lord gave, the Lord hath taken away, and blessed be the name of the Lord!" "Blessed be the name of the Lord!" answered Rabbi Meir. It is well for bereaved parents to say, with Rabbi Meir, under their loss, "Blessed be the name of the Lord."

THE LILIES GATHERED.

REV. EBENEZER ERSKINE, STIRLING.

UPON the 7th day of December, my dear, sweet, and pleasant child, Isabel Erskine, died. I got freedom during her sickness, particularly the same forenoon, before she died, to present her before the Lord, and to plead His covenant on her behalf. The Lord enabled me to quit her freely to Him, on this account, that He had a far better title to her than I. She was mine, only as her earthly father, she is His by creation, preservation, by dedication to Him in baptism, and His also, I hope, by covenant and redemption, and therefore, I am persuaded, she is now His by glorification; and that she is with the Lord Jesus, and with her dear mother, triumphing with God in glory. I had a particular affection for the child, and doted but too much upon her, because she was the likest her mother of any of the children, both as to her countenance and humor. But I see that the Lord will not allow me to have any idols, but will have the whole of my heart to Himself. And, Lord, let it be so! Amen, and amen. She died pleasantly, without any visible pang or throe; her soul, I hope, being carried by angels into Abraham's bosom, and

her body buried by her mother's side in her brother's grave. I take it kindly that the Lord comes to my family to gather lilies wherewith to garnish the upper sanctuary! "for of such is the kingdom of heaven." And oh, it sometimes affords me a pleasing prospect, to think I have so much *plenishing* in heaven before me; and that, when I enter the gates of glory, I shall not only be welcomed by the whole general assembly of saints and angels, but that my wife and four pleasant babes will, in a particular manner, welcome me to those regions of glory, and that I shall join in the hallelujahs of the Higher House, which shall never have an end.

CHILDREN BEFORE THE THRONE.

REV. THOMAS BOSTON, ETTRICK.

I HAD your letter of May, 1726, with the affecting account of your loss of a dear child. I travelled that gloomy road six times, and learned that God has other use for children than our comfort, an use far more honorable and happy for them; and the parents come to see afterwards, that it is a peculiar kindness to the poor babes they were so early carried

off. It likewise serves to let into that Word in particular, in its sweetness, "I will be thy God, and the God of thy seed," while parents are taken up for the salvation of their dying little ones, and look about to see what the Word says with relation to the case. Oh, do not grudge the freedom the Lord has used with you, in pitching upon a precious thing for Himself, and taking it away. Both of you have offered your all to the Lord; and though, when it comes to the pinch, the heart is ready to misgive; yet in calm blood I am sure you will stand to the bargain, and check yourselves for any semblance of repenting. The next time you see your child, you will see him shining white in glory, having been washed in the blood of the Lamb, who was an infant, a child, a boy, a youth, as well as a grown man; because He became a Saviour of infants and little children, as well as of persons come at age.

THE GRAVE A WARDROBE.

MATTHEW HENRY.

BLESSED be God for the covenant of grace with me and mine, it is well ordered in all things and sure. Oh that I could learn to com-

fort others with the same comforts with which, I trust, I am comforted of my God! This comes near, but, O Lord, I submit! I am much refreshed with 2 Kings iv. 26. "Is it well with thee? is it well with thy husband? is it well with the child? and she answered, It is well." Although I part with so dear a child, yet I have no reason to say otherwise but that it is well with us, and well with the child, for all is well that God doeth; He performeth the thing that He appointed for me, and His appointment of this providence is in pursuance of His appointment of me to glory, to make me meet for it.

After the funeral he thus writes: "I have been this day doing a work that I never did, burying a child. A sad day's work; but my good friend Mr. Lawrence preached very seasonably and excellently in the afternoon, from Psalm xxxix. 9. 'I was dumb, I opened not my mouth; because Thou didst it.' My friends testified their kindness by their presence. *Here is now a pretty little garment laid up in the wardrobe of the grave, to be worn again at the resurrection:* Blessed be God for this hope!"

THE BLOOM FALLING INTO CHRIST'S LAP.

SAMUEL RUTHERFORD.

IN a letter, dated St. Andrews, October, 1640, on the death of a friend's child, Rutherford, one of Scotland's most valiant witness-bearers, thus tenderly writes: If our Lord hath taken away your child, your lease of him is expired; and seeing Christ would want him no longer, it is your part to hold your peace, and worship and adore the sovereignty and liberty that the Potter hath over the clay and pieces of clay-nothings, that He gave life unto. And what is man, to call and summon the Almighty to his lower court down here? For He giveth account of none of His doings. And if you will take a loan of a child, and give him back again to our Lord, smiling as His borrowed goods be returned to Him, believe he is not gone away, but sent before; and that the change of the country should make you think, he is not lost to you who is found to Christ; and that he is now before you, and that the dead in Christ shall be raised again. A going-down star is not annihilated, but shall appear again. If he hath cast his bloom and flower, the bloom is fallen in heaven in Christ's lap; and as he was lent awhile to time, so is he

given now to eternity, which will take yourself; and the difference of your shipping and his to heaven and Christ's shore, the land of life, is only in some few years, which weareth every day shorter; and some short and soon reckoned summers will give you a meeting with him. But what — with *him?* Nay, with better company: with the Chief and Leader of the heavenly troops, that are riding on white horses, that are triumphing in glory.

A BUD OF BEAUTY.

REV. ROBERT HALL.

THIS eloquent divine, in speaking of the death of his little boy, says, "God dries up the channels, that you may be haply compelled to plunge into an infinite ocean of happiness. Blissful thought! Father, mother, you who mourn over the grave of your little one, look up! know that the chastening rod is in your heavenly Father's hand, and that if He hath taken away, He first did give, and He doeth all things well. He gave you the bud of beauty, and you centred your happiness in its being. He saw that this was not for your good, so He took away the child, whose pres-

ence had been as a leaping, sparkling streamlet to your heart's love, that that heart, which had before tasted of earthly, might be lost in the immensity of heavenly love.

It is a very solemn consideration, that a part of myself is in eternity, in the presence, I trust, of the Saviour. How awful will it be, should the branch be saved and the stock perish!

VICTORY WITHOUT CONFLICT.

REV. JAMES HERVEY, A.M.

YONDER white stone, emblem of the innocence it covers, informs the beholder of one who breathed out its tender soul almost in the instant of receiving it. There the peaceful infant, without so much as knowing what labor and vexation mean, "lies still and is quiet; it sleeps and is at rest." Staying only to wash away its native impurity in the laver of regeneration, it bade a speedy adieu to time and terrestrial things. Happy voyager! no sooner launched than arrived at the haven!

"Happy the babe, who, privileg'd by fate
To shorter labor, and a lighter weight,
Receiv'd but yesterday the gift of breath,
Order'd to-morrow to return to death."

Consider this, ye mourning parents, and dry up your tears. Why should you lament that your little ones are crowned with victory before the sword is drawn, or the conflict begun. Perhaps the Supreme Disposer of events foresaw some inevitable snare of temptation forming, or some dreadful storm of adversity impending. And why should you be so dissatisfied with that kind precaution, which housed your pleasant plant, and removed into shelter a tender flower, before the thunders roared, before the lightnings flew, before the tempest poured its rage? Oh, remember! they are not lost, but "taken away from the evil to come."

THE FLOWER PLUCKED BY THE MASTER.

A GENTLEMAN'S gardener had a darling child, in whom his affections seemed to be centred. The Lord laid His hand upon the babe: it sickened and died. The father was disconsolate, and murmured at the dealings of Providence.

The gardener had in one of his flower-beds a favorite rose. It was the fairest flower he had ever seen on the tree, and he daily marked its growing beauty, intending, when it was

full blown, to send it to his master's mansion. One morning it was gone: some one had plucked it. Mortified at what he thought was the improper conduct of one of the servants, he endeavored to find out the culprit. He was, however, much surprised to find that it was his master, who, on walking through the garden, had been attracted by the beauty of the rose, and, plucking it, had carried it to one of the beautiful rooms in the hall. The gardener's anger was changed into pleasure. He felt reconciled when he heard that his master had thought the flower worthy of such special notice.

"Ah, Richard!" said the gentleman, "you can gladly give up the rose, because I thought it worthy of a place in my house. And will you repine because your heavenly Father has thought wise to remove your child from a world of sin, to be with Himself in heaven?"

THE CROWN OF LIFE.

REV. RICHARD CECIL.

I PERCEIVE I did not know how much my life was bound up in the life of a creature. When she went, nothing seemed left me; one

is not, and the rest seem a few thin and scattered remains. And yet how much better for my lamb to be suddenly housed, to slip unexpectedly into the fold to which I was conducting her, than remain exposed here; perhaps become a victim. I cried, "O Lord, spare my child!" He did; but not as I meant; He snatched it from danger, and took it to His own home. — Part of myself is already gone to Thee: help what remains to follow!

He who removed our infant has seemed to say, "What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter; patiently suffer this little one to come unto me, for of such is my kingdom composed. Verily, I say unto you, their angels do always behold the face of my Father. If I take away your child, I take it away to Myself." Is not this infinitely beyond any thing you could do for it? Could you say to it, if it had lived, thou shalt "weep no more, the days of thy mourning are ended"? Could you show it any thing in this world like "the glory of God and of the Lamb"? Could you raise it to any honor here like "receiving a crown of life"?

GONE TO SLEEP.

ARCHBISHOP LEIGHTON.

INDEED, it was a sharp stroke of a pen that told me your pretty Johnny was dead. Sweet thing! and is he so quickly laid asleep? Happy he! Though we shall have no more the pleasure of his lisping and laughing, he shall have no more the pain of crying, nor being sick, nor of dying; and hath wholly escaped the troubles of schooling, and all other sufferings of boys, and the riper and deeper griefs of riper years; this poor life being all along nothing but a linked chain of many sorrows and many deaths. Tell my dear sister she is now much more akin to the other world; and this will be quickly passed by us all. John has but gone an hour or two sooner to bed, as children used to do, and we are undressing to follow. And the more we put off the love of this present world, and all things superfluous beforehand, we shall have the less to do when we lie down.

THE GLORY OF DEPARTED INFANTS.

(From the Edinburgh Christian Instructor, Dec. 1817.)

There is scarce a dwelling into which we can enter, but if we speak of the death of children, the starting tear will tell us that from it some are gone, that the flower of beauty opened but to perish, and that the heart doted on it only to bleed in disappointment and sorrow. "Thus saith the Lord, Refrain thy voice from weeping, and thine eyes from tears; for thy work shall be rewarded, saith the Lord, and thy children shall come again from the land of the enemy." (Jer. xxxi. 16.)

You are saying, "Had my children glorified God, this might be expected; I might have hope for their resurrection had that tongue sung his praise, and these hands been lifted up in His name;" but in them He has been honored, though you have neither seen nor known it; and it will be more gratifying to His benevolence to restore them to you than to grant them at first. He who would not permit the disciples to keep back infants from His arms, will not suffer death to detain in the grave the babes He has destined for His bosom. To rescue them He will be the plague

of death and the destruction of the grave, and they who sung not this song before they went to it, shall exclaim as they rise, "O grave, where is thy victory!" But is this all the triumph of departed infants over the last enemy, and him that had the power of death? The spirit, soaring to glory, is more than a conqueror. The lisping babe has been qualified for the song of the Lamb, and from the melody that soothed it to rest, it is gone to those anthems of the blessed, in which it will bear its part in ever-living rapture. Satan hath exulted in the blasted beauty and the early graves of infants, but God has confounded his boastings by clothing them with immortality and perfection, and by raising them to fairer loveliness and sweeter felicity than earth can admit of. The flower, over which the wind passed, is blossoming in heaven in fragrance and beauty, which the fondest workings of fancy could not conceive, and surely it is safer there than under this inclement sky. Thy babe is reposing in the arms of infinite love; Jesus rejoices in its opening excellences, and so mayest thou in faith and hope. The early death of infants has suggested to the heart sunk in despair, as well as raised from the lips of the caviller the expostulation, "Why hath God made any of His creatures in vain?"

But in their translation to glory, this dark dispensation is cleared up, and the merits of the second Adam are delightfully illustrated.

THE

CROWN WITHOUT THE CONFLICT.

MUSINGS ON THE DEATH OF CHILDREN.

REV. R. H. LUNDIE.

AN investigator of pedigrees was searching in a midland county of England, for any traces that might still be found of an old family of the district. He went to the records of the church, but their name was not there, it had perished. He repaired to the supposed site of their ancient hall. Not a stone remained to tell its place. Disappointed in these attempts, he accosted an aged peasant: "Do you know any thing of the Findernes?"

"Findernes?" was the reply. "We have no Findernes here, but we have Findernes' flowers."

Here was a clew. The old man led the way to a field where there were traces of an ancient terrace.

"There," said he, pointing to a bank of garden-flowers grown wild, "there are Findernes' flowers, brought by Sir Geoffrey from the Holy Land; and, do what we will, they will never die."

There are those who will read these lines that can go back ten, twenty, forty years, and recall the time when a child was taken from them. It has left no record in the annals of the world; no more mark than the shining pebble that is thrown into the river, when the waters close over it for ever. Is there, then, no trace to be found beneath the heavens of that loved one? Go, ask the mother bereaved so long ago. There, in the old garden of a heart overgrown with many experiences, and shaded with many a sombre spray of ivy, and many a weeping branch of cypress, flourish still the old memories of that cherished child. His winsome ways, his pleasant prattle, his sunny smile, his look of love, are all remembered still. These flowers of memory bloom as fresh as on the day after the little one was gathered home. The snows of winter may have fallen thick upon that mother's head, but touch the old chord, and it will vibrate true and tender as ever. Encourage her to speak upon this theme, and she will pour forth her recollections of her lost one, and will narrate

to you the incidents of his sickness and his death with a minuteness and detail that will astonish any one who has not had or lost a child. We lately met a mother whose boy was taken from her more than thirty years ago, who told us, as the tear rose to her eye, that when she is looking after the affairs of her household, she sometimes comes upon his toys, and never without a flood of tenderest memories filling her heart.

We train our children; but it is no less true that our children train us. They are meant by God as a means and occasion of much discipline for heaven. How they call out our purest and most unselfish affections! what new tenderness they pour into our hearts! how they humanize and soften the roughest nature! And when taken from us, are they not like magnets to draw our hearts to the things that are above? There are fathers and mothers who seem to see, when they look up into the deep blue of heaven, a dimpled hand that beckons to them, and to hear a silver voice that whispers from the skies, "Come up higher." To very many, the theme of which we have to speak — the removal of children — cannot be out of season.

And, first of all, the parent wishes to be satisfied on this point, Does God love my

children? Does He love them? Ask it father, ask it mother, of thine own heart. Dost *thou* love thy child? Ay, with a love that is stronger than death. And whence springs that parental love of thine? Is it of earth or of heaven? Is it not a rill, a tiny one, from the great fountain of perennial love in the heart of the Father of us all? It was He that taught thee how to love thy child.

See how tender was His care for the six score thousand persons in Nineveh who could not discern between their right hand and their left hand, and for whose sake, in great part, the city was spared.

There was a babe once, in the old land of Canaan, born in the village of Bethlehem, and cradled in a manger there. Did the eye of the great Father look upon *that* babe, and does He not know how to love a human child!

And mark how the *Son of God* loves children. Parents bring their infants to Him that He may touch them. His disciples resent the intrusion, and rebuke them. But Jesus called them unto Him, and said, "Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God." Jesus values them more justly and more fully than his own disciples did. He appreciates their infant immortality, He listens to their lisped

praise. How many an infant voice has learned to say, with childlike trust, these gracious words: "Suffer little children to come unto me." When they so speak, the Master knows that they cannot *understand* like men: He knows, also, that they can *trust* better than men. It is with the little child as with the sinner rescued when his head is hoary, — he can be saved in no other way but through the cleansing blood of Christ.

A fully developed faith is not possible in an undeveloped child. And while faith, as the means of connecting the sinner with the Saviour, is the indispensable condition of entrance into heaven with those to whom faith is a possibility, it is not, it cannot be, with those in whose breasts, from the nature of the case, faith cannot dwell. Else were the remedy inadequate to the disease, else were the plaster smaller than the wound, else it is no longer true, that "where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." We believe accordingly that the population of heaven is very largely made up of children. No small proportion of the human family is cut off in infant years. In reference to the children of the ungodly dying in childhood, Scripture for wise reasons has not broken silence, and however strong the grounds of hope may seem to be, we will

go no further than the record of the written Word, — we, too, will keep silence. But as regards the children of Christian parents cut off in infancy, the same infallible Word does warrant us to speak with confidence. They are born within the covenant: they are within the covenant when they die. "The promise is to you and to your children." "It is not the will of your Father which is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish."

But this leads us to our main inquiry: Is the removal of our children by death consistent with God's love of them and us ?

There are many mysteries on earth, and few, we are free to confess, greater than the sufferings and death of a child. The babe that lies in pain in that little crib has never sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, yet it suffers after the similitude of Adam's suffering. It cries to you for help, and you cannot give it. It has sought a mother's aid in all its previous troubles, and has never sought in vain. If a little advanced beyond infancy, perhaps your dying child, while he cries that mournful cry uttered by so many since the days of the Shunammite's suffering son, "My head, my head," plaintively asks of you what will make him better. You stand helpless beside the son of your love.

You would lay bare your own bosom to receive the blow that is aimed at him. You would lay your own head on the pillow of death if he might live. But it may not be. The last enemy has his hands about your child; and your prayers, your tears, your silent agony, cannot avail to ward off the fatal blow, for his hour is come. We dare not say that no mystery is here. But, believer, as you witness or recall that scene, remember that "the wages of sin is death." And though the sting of death is taken away, the power of death must be felt even by a child.

Yet there are comforts that gather round this sad scene if you can compose your heart to discern and to accept them.

1. To clear away a frequent and natural delusion, we remark, Your sorrow is not exceptional. It is the common lot. Since Adam lost his son, tens of thousands of his posterity have mourned in like bereavement. But you say, "My case is altogether peculiar; no one knows how much my child was to me. Many a father has lost his child, but has any lost such a child as mine? He met my heart's deepest yearnings: he was balm to me in sorrow, he was rest to me in weariness, he was gladness to me always, and more than that, I thought that in his simplicity and light

and love he was God's messenger to wean me from the dross and earthiness of this present life." Well, well, thou woe-stricken parent, we have no heart to debate these points with thee. Weep on, it will do thee good to weep. Thy child was much, was perhaps every thing, to thee: so have other bright and radiant children been to other desolated hearts. Yet some cases may be worse than thine. A friend just returned from New York said to us the other day, "I was arrested in a cemetery, when my eye was scanning the records of the dead, by one gravestone, on which was this inscription: —

"*John, Mary, William, Ellen, Jane.*
Our all."

Not another word was added; not another word could have strengthened that silent testimony to the agony of broken hearts, and to the chill that had fallen upon a family hearth once warmed and brightened by the presence and the joy of children. Mourner, is thy case worse than this?

2. A dying child may suffer, but he does not sorrow. Often his sufferings are less than they seem to us, and especially in the terrible heavings and agonies of the last conflict the

subduing influence of weakness, and the subsiding of consciousness, may make it lighter for our child to endure than for us to witness his struggles; as if the sufferings of a child were meant mainly for the heart of his parent. But even where the suffering of the child is great, there is no sting in it. There are no regrets about the past, there are no anxieties about the future. There is only present pain. Contrast this with the death-beds of men and women. Go to the chamber where a wicked man lies dying: his body may be in agony, but is that the worst part of his sufferings? We have heard such a one, awakened to a sense of his soul's peril on the brink of eternity, cry out, "Every limb of my body is in agony, but it is not that which disturbs me; my soul, my undying soul, what is to become of my soul?" Or if the comparison is held more legitimate, go to the death-bed of a good man, and how often will you find that there are unutterable regrets in his heart for the loss of opportunities of serving his Master and his generation: how often, too, in the hour and the power of darkness has even the holiest man, as he draws near to the valley of the shadow of death, visitings of doubt and dark moments of fear? Bereaved parent, thy dying child had none. He heard the soothing accents of

a mother's lullaby, he felt the soft pressure of a mother's hand, and though his body was in pain, his heart was all at peace. He trusted while he lived, and when he died he trusted still.

3. The departed child of the Christian parent is safe. He is folded by the Good Shepherd where there are no perils to encounter. On this thought, from week to week, and from year to year, you will find your heart dwell with increasing thankfulness. Conflicts he shall never know; temptations are all left behind; a tear shall dim his eye no more. His brief, bright life, you may perhaps be able to say, was an unclouded one. He never felt a storm but the storm which wafted him to heaven. I thought, indeed, to watch the unfolding of that bud so full of promise; how tenderly and lovingly should I have guarded it as it disclosed new beauties every day but — Ay, there is a but! But if he had lived he might have survived his father and his mother, and he might have fallen into hands less tender. In boyhood he might have become the companion of the careless and the wicked. He might — who knows but he might ?— have made shipwreck of his faith. All that might have been; but he is safe: his little bark is moored in the haven where no tempest blows. So grief mellows into gratitude.

And is there not deep cause for gratitude? Your child, through the Lord Jesus Christ, has won the victory without having ever drawn the sword, has put on the crown although he has never borne the cross. May it not be as a mark of peculiar favor and a special fruit of the Saviour's atoning work that your little one has reached such blessedness so easily and so soon?

King David had a son who grew up to manhood, beautiful in person, winning in manners, the favorite of the people and the pride of his father's heart. But gifted in mind and comely in form, his talents were his snare, for his heart was not right with God. That which had seemed to the rejoicing father so beautiful in the opening mind of Absalom the boy, became in Absalom the man, the occasion of the bitterest anguish of that father's heart. In the prime of his days and the pride of his rebellion, Absalom was cut off. Though a rebel, he was yet a son, and David mourned over him as such a father will ever mourn over a loved and lost one. "The king was much moved, and went up to the chamber over the gate and wept; and as he went thus, he said, O my son, Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son!"

King David had another son, a little child. "And the Lord struck the child that Uriah's wife bare unto David, and it was very sick" . . . "and it came to pass on the seventh day that the child died." David mourned for that son also, but with what different feelings in his heart! "Can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me." There is firm faith as well as sore sorrow in his mourning for his child. "I shall go to him," he says. But no such ray of hope strikes across his darkened spirit when he weeps for his lost Absalom with the cry of blank and utter sorrow, "O Absalom, my son, my son." Say, bereaved parent, who weepest for thy child and wilt not be comforted, which was best for David, Absalom spared to the beauty of his mature manhood, or his child snatched from his straining grasp in infancy?

We do not say that such *was* God's reason for dealing with you as He has done, but it may have been. God has His reasons, though He does not tell them all to you. Enough for you that it is your God who has done this thing. Your child has gone to rest for the night. You enter his chamber: he starts, and is afraid. The room is all in darkness, and he cannot see you; but you speak to him. You do not tell him why you are there, but

it is *your* voice he hears. His father is beside him; it is enough. He turns upon his pillow, and he sleeps again. In your own night of weeping, listen, and you will hear your Father's voice, not unriddling for you the mystery that perplexes you, but saying only, "It is I, be not afraid." And when thou knowest it is He, wilt thou not in the darkness trust thy Father as thy child trusts thee?

You tremble, you struggle when the child you love is snatched out of your embrace by an unseen hand; but tremble not. He who takes him into *His* arms knows what it is for you to let him out of *your* arms. You are yourself reconciled to God by the blood of His Son. Like Abraham, you are a friend of God. And just as you are kind, not only to your friend, but to his children for his sake, so is God kind, not only to you, but to your children. It was, perhaps, the fruit and evidence of that kindness that the little one you mourn has been better provided for above, than you could have provided for him here. The Lord chose to have your child beside Himself. And you have done the same thing when your children were absent from their home. You wearied for them; you sent for them; you brought them home again; you must have them with you. The Saviour feels

thus toward his absent children: "Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am." What, then, do you complain of? He has called your little one home; your little one, and His little one. For, let it not be forgotten that though he is your child, he is God's child still more than yours. He is yours but by descent: he is God's by creation and by redemption.

You will learn, ere long, to look on it as a high honor that your child has been sent for by the Heavenly King. When the youthful shepherd of Bethlehem was sent for, to the court of King Saul to play before him on the harp, did his father Jesse hold back the boy? did he refuse to let him go? And if a higher King has need of your son or of your daughter in the courts of heaven, would you refuse the King's demand?

We may gather that children are wanted in the worship of heaven, from the fact that children bear an accepted part in the worship of earth. Under the old dispensation, "the little ones" are present with the captains of the tribes, the elders, the people and the strangers, to enter into covenant with the Lord their God. (Deut. xxix. 10–13.) The prophet Joel, in the name of the Lord thus speaks: "Blow the trumpet in Zion, sanctify

a fast, call a solemn assembly; gather the people, sanctify the congregation, assemble the elders, *gather the children, and those that suck the breasts*," when the priests were to weep between the porch and the altar, and to cry, "Spare thy people, O Lord." (Joel ii. 15–17.) It was the Lord's choice that the treble of infant voices should mingle with the wail of the men and the women of Israel. Among the great multitude who serve him day and night in his temple, God may have need of infant voices: perhaps the joyous voice you loved to hear is wanted there: an infant harp waits for an infant hand to strike it. Father, mother, if it be thy infant, say, wilt thou refuse?

4. As the magnet is to steel, so is a child in heaven to a parent on earth. Nothing brings us into closer contact with God than His taking sole charge of our child. We are its parents still, but we cannot control, we cannot guide, it now. For the purposes of protection and of training, God is its sole father.

You loved heaven before, but your stake in it is deeper now, and your love for it is greater. Perhaps you have a son whose lot is cast in a distant land, about which you knew and cared but little before he went to it. His home is now, let us suppose, in Queensland. A sud-

den interest is awakened in your breast about that land. What you read in reference to it you retain. And if you meet with any one who has been there, how eagerly do you question him about it. You have another child whose lot is cast in a still more distant land. The Lord has taken him to the land of promise. From the day he left you, what a quickened desire you have had to learn about that land! What are the mansions which my child inhabits; who are his companions; what is their employment; and, above all, what is the way to that better country?

If you have not known the way before, or knowing have not walked in it, the cause perhaps is not obscure, as regards your own soul, why your child has been taken thither before you. I have known the shepherd when he failed to guide the sheep as he desired, take up her bleating lamb in his arms, and then with quick step the mother followed. I have known the Shepherd and Bishop of our souls try many plans to make a father and a mother enter the strait gate and walk in the narrow way. Prosperity was sent, and they forgot God: adversity followed, and they murmured that God had forgotten them. The discipline of joy and of sorrow seemed alike ineffectual. At last, the Shepherd gently laid His hand

upon a lamb of their little flock; I noticed that it was the brightest and the most cherished of them all. The parents struggled, but they could not keep their lamb. The Shepherd claimed it, gathered it in his arms, and passed it through the gate of Zion. Then first the parents learned to look on that land as their home, and to seek that He who had folded their little lamb should be their Shepherd too.

5. This cause of sorrow for your child can never return. Sickness from which you recover may leave behind it a tendency to relapse. But not death. That is endured once for all. "It is appointed unto men *once* to die." Your son, your daughter, has got through it, and it is not to be done again. You would not dare to bring your child back again if you could. And in your deepest grief you feel it far better to have had and parted with him for a time, than never to have had him for your own. You bless God that He lent him to you for a season. We can add but one other topic for the consideration of the bereaved parent: —

6. Your sorrow has taught you to sympathize as you never could before. When others suffered as you now suffer, the time was when their trial made no deep impression upon your

heart. But now you will never be heard to say, "It is but a child." A door of entrance is opened for you to sorrowing hearts. You find yourself linked in a blessed companionship with those who, like yourself, have children in heaven. Taught in God's own school, you have learned, with a power that is amazing to yourself, to comfort those that are in trouble with the comfort wherewith you yourself are comforted of God. You had been saying, as Lamech said of Noah, "This child shall comfort us;" while God was saying, "You shall comfort others," being yourselves comforted with the comfort not of a living child on earth, but of a glorified child in heaven. Thus you may be a more useful if a sadder man, because your child is taken from you; and usefulness, not pleasure, is what God's people are to labor for on earth.

You have meditated on all these themes of consolation and on many more. You have realized the honor conferred upon you of having a ransomed child in heaven. And while the heathen, who was told that his son was dead, could say, "I knew that my son was mortal," you are able to say, "I know that my son is immortal." Nevertheless, there are times when your sorrow seems stronger than your solace, and your feebleness seems greater

than your faith, and your lonely heart will only cry, "My child, my child!" You, though a father, have yourself a Father, who taught you to love that child with such a love. He knows how you miss and mourn him, and if you lean on Him, and look to Him, He will surely bring you peace. Wait, mourning parent, wait, and follow the voice of the lamb as he is carried in the Shepherd's arms, and you shall see your child again.

Finally, bereaved parent, thou mayest have children living still. Let the memory of him whose place is empty, when they gather round thee, engage thee to give them each and to give them wholly to the Lord. And thou, parent, who hast never thus been tried, look round upon thine unbroken band with rejoicing, yet with trembling heart, and listen to the voice that says to thee in reference to each one of them, "Take this child and nurse it for me." Dedicate him to the Lord; so if he lives, it will be better for thee and for him. Dedicate him to the Lord; thy child may die.

COMFORT FOR MOURNERS IN GENERAL.

THE SAVIOUR'S SYMPATHY WITH THE AFFLICTED.

REV. DR. JOHN EADIE, GLASGOW.

IT is in the period of suffering and bereavement that the soul is brought into nearer contact with God, and knows Him, not from what it believes, but from what it enjoys, — not from what it has been taught, but from what it has experienced. We are all aware that our Lord is named the "Man of Sorrows," and we are taught that He is "touched with the feeling of our infirmities;" but we do not adequately comprehend the truth, till, under the pressure of infirmity, we enjoy His sympathy; and then we can say, Now we know it, for we have felt it. There is truly a sublime meaning in the words which He spoke to Martha,

"I am the Resurrection and the Life;" but only those circumstanced as she was — the grave having closed over her brother — can really enter into their nobility and triumph. He who has never felt the pang or desolation of bereavement — whose heart has never been pierced by the barbed and mortal shaft — who has never gazed on the corpse of parent, brother, or child, and seen it closed up from view — who has never made one of the group of weeping mourners that stand, in inexpressible solemnity, by the grave, and feel a sad sinking of heart as they leave behind them, in dust and darkness, that form which they shall not see again till Christ descend and the trumpet sound — such a scathless and untried believer cannot, though he would, unfold to himself the sweetness and comfort of the saying, "I am the Resurrection and the Life." There is no Christian heart that does not hold by the pledge, "My grace is sufficient for thee;" but it is only when "weakness" overpowers it, that it can really find that His "strength is made perfect." Without affliction, the purest and closest knowledge of God could never be acquired; a veil would still seem to lie upon Him. The glory that surrounds Him might dazzle us; but we should still be comparative strangers to the tenderness and love

of His heart. Still at a distance from Him, we would indeed trust Him; but when He lays His hand upon us and brings us nearer Him, then do we acquaint ourselves with His loving-kindness, no longer by report, but by tasting it. You may have seen the solar beam thrown back in yellow splendor from the crystal rocks, as they glistened with gold, but now you have found and gathered the precious ore. It is one thing to admire the beauty of His pavilion, and another thing to be in it; one thing to know Him from what He has said, and another to know Him in what He has done. Surely experimental intimacy far excels theoretic information; but it is gained only in the school of affliction.

Did, therefore, the friendship of Christ secure us against suffering, it would shade from our view these prime and happy lessons. But Christ is anxious that we learn them, and therefore, though he loves us, He permits us to suffer, that we may yearn for a fuller sense of His presence, and, penetrating into His heart, know, because we feel, the love and power of our Beloved and Friend.

"JESUS WEPT."

REV. DR. EADIE.

MARVELLOUS spectacle! Jesus wept, as the mourners about him wept! The sight of such sorrow overpowered Him, and He could not refrain. That was a true manhood, which felt this touch of nature, and burst into tears. There was no Stoicism in His constitution. There was no attempt to train down His sympathies, and educate Himself to a hard and inhuman indifference. Neither was He ashamed of His possession of our ordinary sensibilities. He felt it no weakness to weep in public with them that wept. So sinful did sin appear in its penalty of death — so saddening was the desolation which death had brought into that happy home — so humbling was the picture of Lazarus, alive and active but a few days before, but now laid in the narrow vault, and carefully concealed from view, that the Saviour bowed to the stroke, and, under the impulse of genuine sympathy, "Jesus wept." Perhaps the prospect of His own death and entombment rose up suddenly before Him, — the thought that He should soon be as Lazarus now was, a cold and inanimate corpse, with weeping mourners making a similar procession to His

tomb. And though He had but to take a few steps more, and the greatest of His miracles should be achieved, and he that was dead should be raised, — so powerful and tender were His mingled sensations that "Jesus wept."

Shall we use the common term, and say that He was "unmanned"? No. Such an epithet originates in a grievous misinterpretation of our nature. Is man to be denied the relief of tears, and woman only to be so privileged? Is it beneath his masculine robustness to show a moistened eye? Is he to be a traitor to deepest and purest emotion, and to attempt to cauterize the fountain of tears? No. Christ, the model of manhood, the mirror of all that was noble and dignified, did not deny Himself the relief; and shall men be looked upon as effeminate, as falling from the dignity of their sex, if, with emotions like Christ's, they shed tears like Him? No. Perish that dignity which would aspire to a transcendental apathy that man was not made for, and which Jesus despised! The tear is as genuine as the smile. He who would do such violence to his nature, insults its Creator, and would foolishly set himself above the example of the Redeemer. Instead of raising himself above humanity, he sinks beneath its level. The brow that never wore

a smile is not more unnatural than the eye that never glistened with a tear.

Therefore do we vindicate for the afflicted mourner the privilege of tears. You are not giving way to sin, when you are giving way to tears. Man is not disgracing his manhood, nor woman showing herself to be but a woman, when they weep under bereavement. Try not to be above the Saviour. It is not sin to mourn, but the sin is to murmur, — to fall into querulous repining as if God had wronged you, and it needed an effort on your part to forgive Him. We are sure that Jesus harbored no grudge of this nature against His Father in heaven; and yet He wept. To forbid tears is to impose a cruel penance, — is to deny a luxury to the mourner in which his Lord indulged. O thou of the bruised heart! when thou goest to the supulchre where the beloved dust is garnered, weep, but not in dejection, — weep, but repine not; disturb not the unbidden tear, as thou art in the place of burials. The dust thou sorrowest over cannot indeed respond; but the time is coming when thy tears shall be wiped away by the very hand that inflicted the stroke. . . .

Whichever form of bereavement oppresses you, oh, be comforted by the thought that "Jesus wept;" that He who so wept is still

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unchanged in nature; that the heart which was so troubled is as susceptible now as then, and beats in unison and sympathy with you under such trials and sorrows. What a comforter is the Elder Brother, who knows what it is to be bereaved, and will, out of such experience, soothe and solace His people! Nay, more: for eighteen hundred years the Man Jesus has been employed in binding up the bleeding in heart, and healing all their wounds. Every variety of grief He has dealt with, and with every element and form of it He is perfectly familiar. If there be power in human sympathy to lighten the load of woe, oh, how much more in the sympathy of Him who "bore our griefs and carried our sorrows,"— whose words of comfort reach the heart, — who gives Himself, to be loved in room of the object taken away, — and gathers the departed into a blessed company before the throne, with the prospect of a happy and unclouded reunion! Let the mourner never forget the image of the weeping Saviour. Oh, how it will reassure him, and fill him with unspeakable consolation! Thou weepest, but "JESUS WEPT!"

HOW TO SYMPATHIZE WITH MOURNERS.

REV. DR. CHARLES J. VAUGHAN, VICAR OF DONCASTER.

SORROW is a great test of truth. Nothing which has the slightest tinge of unreality, whether in the form of exaggeration or of affectation, has a chance of acceptance with persons in deep trouble. There must be, as a first condition, the recognition of the existence in the sufferer's case of that which is hard to bear; and there must be, as a second condition, the presentation of that which is perfectly supporting, because absolutely true, to meet it, if a man would minister with any effect to one on whom pain or loss, anxiety or desolation, has laid a heavy hand. Too often there is an attempt to ignore the sorrow; to treat it as if it were made too much of; almost to reprove it, as if it were fanciful or voluntary. It is difficult for health and sickness, ease and distress, a whole heart and a wounded heart, to meet and sympathize: grief is suspicious of gladness, and is slow to be persuaded that he who comes to the house of mourning from the dwelling of cheerfulness can bring with him a just appreciation of the calamity which he seeks to soothe. To be able to *weep with them that weep* is a necessary requisite in one who would be, in the divine sense, *a son of consolation.*

It is the first object of sorrow, if we recognize in it any object at all, that it be felt. If there is a remedial purpose in it, or if there is even a chastening and a humble purpose in it, this can only be answered by the entrance of the pain itself into the very soul's soul. This is what an inexperienced comforter will not let it do. He acts, with his spiritual comfort, just as he thinks it wrong and shocking for another to act with his worldly comfort. He counts it a great sin to drown sorrow by letting in the din of the world upon it; but does he not himself seek to overbear sorrow in an opposite manner, by haste and precipitation in administering the remedies of the Gospel? Truths which will be valuable and efficacious a month hence, may themselves be inoperative and inaudible to-day. And the wise physician, like Him whose hand is working with him from above, will abide and watch his time. He will be satisfied, in the first instance, that the soul should lay itself low and let the wave pass over it. Its foot must touch the bottom of the deep waters before it can safely rise again to their surface. All that we can desire to hear from the rent heart, in the first hours of anguish, is the simple confession, *It is the Lord.*

"THY WILL BE DONE."

REV. DR. HENRY ALFORD, DEAN OF CANTERBURY.

I SUPPOSE, when we say every day, "Thy will be done," in our Lord's prayer, we mean, "Here I am, dispose of me as Thou wilt." And doubtless such a general feeling is a good and salutary one, an excellent introduction to our daily duties and trials. It may be well, however, to put it sometimes more to the test, and question it somewhat more closely than Christians usually do. Have we reflected, when we thus say, that our heavenly Father's will evidently is, that we should become perfect, as our Saviour did, through *suffering?* Have we made our account, that health and strength, fortune and friends, are all in His hand, suspended in the balance with our eternal welfare? that our Father's care over us is such, that if one of them is seen by Him to outweigh and interfere with our soul's health, He will surely interpose and take it from us? Have we borne in mind, that the very day, in whose opening hour we kneel in our closets and say, "Thy will be done," may see our whole life's bitterest and dreariest passage, — may behold us stricken down by our Father's judgment, may make the strong man

a miserable wreck, the rich man a poor bankrupt, the social man a solitary in the world's wilderness? Do those whose souls are knit in one by love's closest tie of God's own sanctioning, reflect, when they say these words together in the morning, that one may be taken before the evening, and the other left, to try how deep the resignation to God's will really was? Does it ever cross the mother's mind, as she teaches the blessed prayer to her babe, fresh risen and bright in the morning, that ere night His will may indeed be done upon both, — that she may be striving to suffer it on earth, while her darling is doing it in heaven? Far be it from me to dash or imbitter the heart's joys, pure and holy like these. But, O brethren, such thoughts as these will not dash nor imbitter joy. Then it is imbittered, when the soul has made her nest and her home here below, has gazed on her beloved object insatiably, and never thought of God — has used the world as if she possessed it — and some hour when all is fair and serene, in the midst of much treasure laid up for many years, comes the fatal stroke, unlooked for, unaccountable, irremediable. One such record I have seen engraved on the tomb of a beloved child: "The miserable parents ventured their all on this frail bark, and the wreck

was total." This is bitterness indeed; but to see all our comforts coming day by day from God's hand — to live in the continual consciousness that He who to-day tries our gratitude by giving them, may to-morrow try our faith by withdrawing them, — this is not to poison joy, but to enhance it tenfold, — it is not to blight the fair plant, but to give it strength and endurance, so that it shall flourish not only in the sunshine but in the storm; not only in the morn and promise of life, but amidst disappointment and decay and death.

"Thy will be done." And what if that will be not only afflictive, but dark and mysterious also? What if God be pleased to wound just where we believed we wanted cherishing? What if to the weak and short-sighted eye of sense He even seem as a tyrant, delighting in doing us harm, striking us when we are down, yea, forgetting His own promises and breaking His everlasting covenant? O brethren, I know how hard it is in such cases to feel from the heart this prayer, — how the words seem almost to choke us in utterance, and the petition to be more than we ever can really attain to. But let us not, for all that, relinquish our trust in our Father's love and care of us. What He does, we know not, we know not now; but we shall know hereafter. I remem-

ber, on one of those glorious days of all but cloudless sunshine, with which some of our summers abound, passing in view of a well-known line of bare and majestic downs, then basking in the full beams of noon. But on one face of the hill rested a mass of deep and gloomy shadow. On searching for its cause, I at length discovered one little speck of cloud, bright as light, floating in the clear blue above; this it was which cast on the hill-side that ample track of gloom. And what I saw was an image of Christian sorrow. Dark and cheerless often as it is, and unaccountable as it passes over our earthly path, in heaven its token shall be found; and it shall be known to have been but as a shadow of His brightness, whose name is Love. In this case too, then, His will be done; rest in the Lord, and He shall make it plain. It is good to wait; it lifts men above the world and out of themselves, and they grow in the knowledge of their Father and God, and in ripeness for the day when He shall be revealed.

SORROW FOR THE DEAD.

PRINCIPAL TULLOCH, D.D., ST. ANDREWS.

THE New Testament teaches us to think of our dead ones as "asleep." "Them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him." (1 Thess. iv. 14.) They are gone from us, but they rest in the Lord. And when they awake, they will be still with Him. Why, then, should we weep for those who, now calmly resting in Christ, await a joyful resurrection?

As "sleep is to waking, so is death to the resurrection." It is the dawn of a resurrection Morning which gives its full force to the image. In death there is rest from care and sorrow, and all the ills which make life painful; and so far it is like to sleep, when we lie down and put from us, in unconscious slumber, the cares of the day, the sorrows that may have vexed us, or other ills that may have pained or wearied us. But it requires the assurance of an awakening to complete the analogy. It were little to say to men, as Socrates said long ago, that death is a "great gain," even if we only think of it as a "deep sleep in which one has had no dream." Insensibility is better than pain or toil. But to

the Christian the sleep of death is only the prelude to a joyful day. The sleeper awakes refreshed and strengthened to a "mightier power of life." The believer sinks to rest in the grave that he may rise again on the resurrection Morning in new and more glorious being. "For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him."

It was this view of death of which the heathen knew nothing. They might think of their dead ones as resting in the dust. Their Philosophers might discourse of a dreamless sleep; and their Poets sing of a long night of perpetual slumber towards which they were hastening; but they knew nothing of the Morning that was to break on their long sleep, of the Resurrection to which it was destined. Even the ancient Hebrews saw this but dimly, and therefore they cried, "The living, the living, he shall praise Thee. For the grave cannot praise Thee; death cannot celebrate Thee: they that go down into the pit cannot hope for Thy truth." (Isaiah xxxviii. 18–19.) "In death there is no remembrance of Thee: in the grave who shall give Thee thanks?" (Ps. vi. 5.) "The dead praise not the Lord, neither any that go down into silence." (Ps. cxv. 17.) Prophet

and Psalmist had at the best but a feeble hold of the doctrine of Resurrection to Eternal Life. They saw before them the darkness; they felt, with something of horror, the silence of the tomb, but the eye of faith did not pierce steadily beyond the voiceless gloom. Life and immortality have only been brought clearly to light in the Gospel, — in Him who hath Himself risen "the first-fruits of them that sleep." And hence, the Christian alone looks with cheerful hopefulness in death. Others may face it with steadfastness or calm: he alone lies down to sleep in hope. Not only without fear, but in joy he enters the dark valley, and friends lay him in the narrow prison-house, "dust to dust, in the hope of a joyful Resurrection." "For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. . . . Then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ." (1 Cor. xv. 53–57.)

It is this fact of Resurrection which leads the apostle to say that we who remain alive should not sorrow for our dead ones, "even as

others which have no hope." (1 Thess. iv. 13.) Why, indeed, should we thus sorrow, who believe that as "Jesus died and rose again, even so them also who sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him"? (1 Thess. iv. 14.) They who had no such faith, might well weep as they buried their Dead out of sight and knew not whether they should ever more see the light of life. But why should we hopelessly weep for those who are resting with the Lord, who have gone before to be for ever with Him? Why, indeed, but for the faintness of our hearts and the weakness of our flesh? Let us sorrow rather for ourselves, that our sight is so dim and our faith so dull—that we are so little able to look beyond things which are "seen and temporal" to those which are "unseen and eternal." The Living, rather than the Dead, may have a claim upon our sorrowful regard. For the Dead have gone beyond our anxiety. They have entered into their rest. They are asleep in Jesus; while the living, who are around us, and with us, may be wandering far away from Him, may be wounding Him by their sins, may be "crucifying Him afresh and putting Him to an open shame." It is as if we were to weep for the child resting in its father's bosom, sheltered in a happy home, rather than for the

child who has gone astray in darkness, and cannot find its homeward way. It is as if we were to sorrow for the mariner who has found a safe harbor, and rests in peace, rather than for the storm-tossed sailor in the open main, around whom the billows may be heaving high, and over whom the sky may be darkening to his doom. No, brethren, let us not sorrow for those who are with God, safe in a Father's house, sheltered in the haven of eternal rest. But let us be anxious and careful for the Living, that we may help them, and guide them by God's blessing in a right way; and for ourselves, that we may "know the things which belong unto our peace before they are hid from our eyes."

"HOW ARE THE DEAD RAISED UP, AND WITH WHAT BODY DO THEY COME?"

PROFESSOR ISLAY BURNS, D.D., FREE CHURCH COLLEGE, GLASGOW.

"BUT how are the dead raised up, and with what body do they come?" The question will still recur, not on the suggestion only of a wistful curiosity, but under the pressure of those doubts which the physical difficulties of the case now, as in the Apostle's days,

awaken. How shall it be possible even for Omnipotence itself to gather together again, from the sepulchres of all the ages, the dust of each of His saints, so long since dissolved, dispersed, blown about the world, mixed up with other organisms, taken up into the very blood and flesh of other animals and other men, in the long succession of ages? How shall each reclaim his own, when the same substance, the same identical particles have belonged successively to many? Can Omnipotence itself overcome the natural impossibility of the same atom being in two places and forming a part of two distinct material organisms, at once? Surely if the immortal spirits of men are again to be invested with a material form, it cannot be the same identical body which they laid aside at death, and which they left behind them in the grave. The objection is specious, but not solid. It is founded altogether, not on the difficulties of the doctrine itself, but on an erroneous and superficial understanding of the doctrine. The identity of animal organisms is an identity, not of particles, but of form and structure and continuous sentient life. Even during our present state of existence, while the organic identity of our bodies remains, their material substance is incessantly changing; so that in

the course of a very few years every single atom of their present framework shall have passed away and given place to others. Thus, in this sense, the body of the child is different from the body of the boy, and the body of the boy from that of the man, and the substance we take from our mother's womb is not the same, but wholly other than that which we shall lay in the tomb. It is not in this, then, that our true identity consists, seeing that amid all the incessant change that in this respect takes place, that identity remains all the while unaffected. There is no individuality in atoms; each one, so far as we know, is like another, and can contribute nothing therefore to the distinctive peculiarity or differentia of the bodies which they compose. I am what I am, not because I am composed of such and such particles, but because out of such particles I have been moulded by the plastic hand of God, into that distinctive form and type of organic subsistence which belongs to me, as an individual, and which is mine and not another's. Even if, by a miracle, every atom of my bodily substance were in an instant eliminated and substituted by others, I would still remain, as to every thing which constitutes my true identity, alike in body as in soul, totally unchanged. In this sense, then,—that is

to say, in the sense, not of an atomic, but of an organic and vital identity, — the body of our resurrection shall be the same with the body of our burial. As the body of our birth is the same with the body of our death, so shall be the body of our death with the body of our immortality. It will be changed, and yet the same, — changed in its conditions, properties, powers; the same in individual form and type, in its characteristic style and physiognomy, in the proportion of its parts, and its special adaptation to the uses of that one particular soul to which it inalienably belongs; so truly the same that both we ourselves shall be sure of it, and all who knew us before in the flesh shall recognize and know us again. It will be the same, though raised now to the full predestined perfection of its nature, conformed to its true ideal, even as its type was cast in the eternal thought of God from the first, — bright, beautiful, glorious, each according to its own individual style and fashion of brightness, beauty, glory, as every true work of God is and must be. It was thus that the Apostle, in his own grand way, solved the difficulty: "Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die: and that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of

some other grain: But God giveth it a body as it hath pleased Him; and to every seed his own body. . . . So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption: it is raised in incorruption; it is sown in dishonor: it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness: it is raised in power; it is sown a natural body: it is raised a spiritual body. . . . So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory." (1 Cor. xv. 36–54.)

Here, then, we must pause. With this glimpse of the glory to be revealed, grand, but undefined, we must rest satisfied. Other questions manifold, and to the thoughtful spirit of deepest interest, we might ask, but cannot answer. What precisely shall be the new conditions, capacities, powers of our resurrection life? In what respects shall it be the same, and in what unlike our present earthly state? What new avenues of knowledge shall we possess, what new organs of perception, what new spheres of activity, and springs of enjoyment? Shall there be music, poetry, art, science, deepening research, and advancing knowledge of the works and ways of God, in heaven, even as here? Where shall the final

seat of the blessed be? or shall they be confined, as now, to any exclusive spot, — to any one single orb in the immensity of God's universe; or shall they not rather roam at large through all its wide domains, tread free and unrestrained through all the streets of the illimitable city of God? Shall we still, then as now, only scan from afar, the course of the planetary orbs, and the twinkle of the distant Pleiades, or shall we be permitted to visit them, and know all about them, and be at home in them, as in so many chambers of the one Father's house? In what form or stage of their development shall the bodies of the blessed rise, — as in youth, or in manhood, or in ripe majestic age? Shall the child of this world be still a child in heaven; or expand all at once in that wondrous transfiguration moment, into the fulness of its stature and perfection of its powers? and shall the old man be still an old man for ever; or shall he not rather, by that great regenerative baptism, be brought back to all the freshness and strength of his manly prime? Shall we, in short, appear then, just as we were when death took us; and not rather as we were or might have been, at our best? Shall the great Architect of that new creation realize the true and perfect ideal of the life of His saints; or the

restoration only, though in a glorified state, of their actual form here below? We cannot tell. We know not what we shall be. Enough, that God knoweth, and that He planneth and doeth all things well. Enough, that however high our conceptions of the unseen world, and sublime our aspirations in regard to it, it will still be something higher and grander far than we dream; for "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him." Enough, that there shall be a new heaven, and a new earth, and that we shall be made perfectly meet to possess and to enjoy it. Enough, and above all, that Christ shall be there, and that "when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is."

CHRIST'S DELAY TO INTERPOSE AGAINST DEATH.

REV. DR. JOHN KER, GLASGOW.

"Then when Mary was come where Jesus was, and saw Him, she fell down at His feet, saying unto Him, Lord, if Thou hadst been here, my brother had not died."—JOHN XI. 32.

ANOTHER reason why Christ permits death is, *that the sorrowing friends may learn entire*

reliance on Him. It is a subject for study in this chapter, how Christ leads on these sisters from a dead brother to the Resurrection and the Life, and teaches them through their loss to gain what they never could lose any more. Had He snatched Lazarus from the brink of death, they would have trembled again at his every sickness, but when they learn to find their brother in Christ, they are secure of him for ever, and they discover in Christ Himself more than their heart conceived, —

> "One deep love doth supersede
> All other, when her ardent gaze
> Roves from the living brother's face
> And rests upon the Life indeed."

Christ separates our friends from us for a while that we may learn to find our all in Himself. He makes their grave the seed-bed of immortal hopes, which shall give us back every thing that is good in the past, and a joy with it like the joy of harvest. The expression of our resignation in bereavement is as much a triumph of His grace as the calmness He gives to our dying friends. When Martha and Mary can still call Him "*Lord*," and when their "hope can smile on all other hopes gone from them," — when they can clasp Christ as their portion amid desolation around and

within, — Christ Himself is justified in the permission of death. . . .

We mention, as a last reason for Christ's delay to interpose against death, *that He brings in thereby a grander final issue.* Had He come and arrested this sickness midway, or raised Lazarus to life so soon as he died, the gladness of the friends would not have been so great, nor would his own triumph over death have been so illustrious. But He patiently waits his hour, while the mourners weep and the scoffers scorn. Men must interpose when they can, but the Son of God interposes when He wills. The wisdom with which He chooses his time makes his delay not callous nor cruel, but considerate of our best interests in withholding for a while that He may bless us at last with an overflowing hand. Could the mourners see it as He does, they would willingly acquiesce, and would go forth patiently sowing in tears that they might have a more abundant reaping-time of joy.

It is in this interval of delay that our life is cast. The world is represented by this home of Bethany before Christ reached the grave, and all the phases of character, and all the stages of Christ's progressive advance may be seen in the hearts of men around us. But at whatever step of his journey man's faith may

discern Him, He is surely on His way. The tide of eternal life is setting in toward the world of graves, and its swell and its murmur can be already perceived by all who have a soul to feel the heaving of Christ's heart. Amid the tears and sobs of the bereaved friends, whose sorrows still touch Him, He is moving to the sepulchre. His presence, though unseen, can be heard and felt in whispered consolations, — in the faith and hope which His Spirit infuses into the soul. Those who know Him for what He is, recognize a Friend who weeps in sympathy with them, and who walks by their side to the tomb which His voice shall yet open. The delay seems long, but He counts the hours as we do; and not for a single one will He linger beyond what infinite wisdom sees fit. One result of this delay shall be a grander final issue. He permits His friends to descend with broken ranks into the swellings of Jordan, but He will lead them forth on the other side in one fully-marshalled and bannered host. He puts the jewels one by one into His crown within the secret of His palace, that He may bring them out at last resplendent and complete as a royal diadem from the hand of His God. Patient waiting shall have its full compensation on that day, and divine delay justify itself before the

universe in glorious and everlasting results. Could we see to the end, it would reconcile us even now. He discerns it for us, and withholds His hand from premature and imperfect interference. After their burst of weeping, He hushes the separate voices for a season in the silence of death, till they can awake and sing in full harmony, that their united praise may still the enemy and the avenger, and be his glory and their own joy for ever.

A LOVELY LIFE.—ITS CLOSING SCENE.

REV. GEORGE GILFILLAN, DUNDEE.

THERE was one event in my domestic history at this time which cast a deep shadow on my soul, and weakened me for the contest with my spiritual foes. This was the death of a dear little girl who was connected with me, and whom I regarded as a daughter. I am guilty of no conscious exaggeration when I call my Agnes all that Mrs. Stowe has since represented in Eva, — one of the rarest specimens of the workmanship of Heaven. In her simple yet profound nature was united a wisdom beyond her years to the most bewitching artlessness. Playful, yet serious; quick in feeling; buoyant in spirits; fond of books and of solitude to

a degree which is rarely to be found in one so utterly a child; affectionate and open-hearted, she wielded a gentle fascination which was felt beyond her own little circle, and attested by the tears which the news of her loss drew from many to whom she was but partially known. Her face was one of those which, without being perfectly regular in their beauty, win their way still more beseechingly to the heart. Its leading characters were transparent openness,—every feature obeying the motions of the mind within, promptly and fully as the wave receives the sunbeam; great flexibility and intelligence of expression; and that indescribable something which *naïveté* and heart unite in stamping on the countenance. Her brow was prominent, pale as marble, and nobly expanded; her eyes, —

> "Oh, speak not of her eyes! — they were
> Twin mirrors of the Scottish summer heaven;"

her chin Grecian, as if chiselled by Phidias; her cheek, in exercise or emotion, often flushing up through its paleness into a rich and roseate hue; her voice clear, sweet, none the less for its Norland accent, and predicting a beautiful singer; and her step light, airy, and swift as a "roe or a young hart upon the mountains." Disease — it was severe whooping-

cough — changed her countenance, ere it sent her away, spreading a fearful pallor over the whole, protruding the fine eye into a stare of anguish, and choking up the music of her voice, which, inarticulate, became unable to express her thickening thoughts and wants; but death restored her to herself, and almost all her former beauty clustered round her corpse. Death is often a ghastly disguise, a dread mask, reminding you of an ill-executed picture. But *she* was so calmly beautiful, so spiritually still, so smilingly radiant amidst her marble coldness, that but for the heart-heard whisper — how stilly low! — "It is for ever," and the shudder springing from the touch of the icy brow, you would have said, "The maid is not dead; she only sleepeth." Death seemed forced to smile out the news of immortality from her dear cold countenance. It was solemn beyond expression to see friend after friend coming in on tiptoe, raising the covering, looking and leaning over the face, and with sighs or tears, or aspect of withered unweeping woe, turning away. It was inexpressibly touching, too, to see the immediate relatives taking their last look ere the lid of the coffin was closed, amid bursting sobs, and all the other irrepressible signs of sorrow — suddenly brought under the sense of an eternal separation; one parent the while looking not

— daring not to look — but patting the dear brown head once more, and hurrying away. In a sweet southerly side of the beautiful kirk-yard of Fettercairn, beside the bones of her grandfather (and now of her father, who loved her so fondly), under the clear blue sky of the north, and in the expectation of the coming, to this sunlit vale of tears, of Jesus Christ with His holy angels, repose, and have for twenty-five years reposed, the remains of one who never gave a pang to a friend's heart, nor armed with a rod a father's hand; whose memory shall be cherished, and her sweetest name repeated, and the spot where lies her virgin dust visited and watered with tears, while there lives one of those who really knew her, or felt how insipid in comparison was all love beside what *she* inspired — of one who in the brief business of her existence exhibited the affection of the amiable child, the ardor of the docile scholar, the liveliness of the fearless girl, and the graces of the saint sanctified from the womb. She was my play-fellow when cheerful, my comforter when sad; her artless yet piercing prattle at once soothed and roused my mind; and assuredly, amid all the "chambers of my imagery," I have never had an idol like her, whose premature loss I continue bitterly, yet submissively, to deplore.

Not so submissive were my feelings at the time. How my heart bled, and what dark, unhappy thoughts crossed my soul, as I saw this good and beautiful young being writhing in anguish, and weeping with her fearful pain, till there came at last a wild and merciful delirium, and gave her partial forgetfulness! And it was not till I saw the child I loved so dearly fairly committed to the grave, and had leaned a long time in anguish over a tombstone which was casting its shadow on the little spot, and, looking up to the sun shining so bright and cold in the spring sky, had said within myself, as Scott cried at the burial of one of his friends, "There shall be less sunshine for me henceforth," that tears came to my relief, and a rainbow of resignation, if not of hope, seemed to smile through these bitter yet blessed tears.

RESIGNATION TO THE DIVINE WILL.

MRS. JANET HAMILTON, LANGLOAN, COATBRIDGE.

NOT long since I paid a visit to a neighbor of mine who had lately suffered some severe domestic bereavements. She was lately the mother of two sweet and amiable girls. She never had any other children, and being on the shady side of fifty herself, she had looked

forward with hope to a time, when the infirmities of old age would overtake her, to receive from them that attention, help, and comfort which their filial love and dutiful affection seemed to warrant. But "God, who seeth not as man seeth," and who often brings His own people "through fire and water to a wealthy place," saw fit to remove the green and tender saplings; thereby loosening the earth-bound roots of the mother tree, though in the process every fibre of her heart thrilled with agony at the separation. And in this, her hour of bitter trial, she was sometimes ready to say with her Saviour in His agony, "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me," still she was enabled to add, "not my will, but Thine be done." This being the happy frame of this mother's mind, she was enabled to bear up under the heavy shock given to maternal love and natural feeling by the sudden death of her youngest daughter, who was cut off by scarlatina, after a few days' illness. The eldest, who had also been attacked by the same disease, partially recovered, but, after lingering for some months, followed her sister to the grave. It was about a week after the interment that I paid the visit to the mother I have already mentioned. I found her sitting alone, and busy knitting. Some mourn-

ers put away and hide from sight clothes, books, toys, and every relic of the beloved dead. Not so Mrs. G.; the work of the eldest girl lay on the table, and the stools on which the children used to sit still occupied their respective places, and their school-bags still hung on their accustomed pegs. She was pale and grave, but wore a look of patience and resignation. When she saw me, she rose and held out her hand; and, although her eyes filled and her lip quivered when she did so, she soon recovered her composure. The Bible of the eldest lay on the table before her. It had been almost her sole companion since her daughter's death, and the source from which she had drawn comfort and resignation.

After a short pause, I said to her, "Margaret, is it well with thee? is it well with the child?" Without hesitation she replied, "It is well, He hath done all things well, and I am resigned to His will." She then pointed to the now open Bible before her. "See," she said, "that was my Elizabeth's Sunday school Bible, and there are the texts chosen and marked out by her, to prove the exercise given out by her teacher for the coming Sunday —(the exercise was this, 'we should be resigned to the will of God in all things')— but little did she or I think that we must prove it, not only by

suitable Scripture proofs, but also by our own resignation and submission to the will of God in the heavy trial so near at hand. For, when Sunday came, my Elizabeth lay on her death-bed, and in the delirium of fever she constantly repeated at intervals, in broken words, the intended exercise, 'We should be resigned to the will of God in all things;' and blessed be God, who enabled me, at each unconscious repetition of the exercise, to respond in my heart to the precious sentence. She had a conscious interval before death, during which she several times expressed a wish to die and to be with Jesus, and her last audible words were the refrain of her favorite hymn, 'O Lamb of God, I come!' She fell asleep in Jesus. And I have also a good hope, through grace, for my dear little Janet. And though I sit alone here I am not solitary, for God is with me. And in this book (referring to her daughter's Bible) my Elizabeth 'being dead yet speaketh.' My daughters are gone to God, but I have many other sources of consolation; for never now (it might have been so had they lived) shall sin, sorrow, or shame light upon them."

She ceased to speak; and I found that she, whom I came to comfort, had ministered both comfort and instruction to myself.

A WORD TO PARENTS.

REV. HENRY ALLON, LONDON.

WHAT a deep religiousness appeals to us in a child! How simply it prays, how implicitly it believes, how reverently it feels! It has to learn to disbelieve. What a lesson to our hard, unspiritual, unbelieving nature is the simple, pure, and beautiful religiousness of a child. Thank God, our seared battered hearts come day by day into contact with the gentle innocence, purity, and love of children. Thank God, we are all children before we are men and women. Happy is he who is wise enough, and humble enough, to learn the lessons that his child teaches him.

No wonder that Christ himself takes a little child and makes him the exemplar of his new kingdom. While the worldly teacher of a child is ever summoning him to manhood, the spiritual teacher of a man is ever recalling him to childhood. Christ bids us return to the guileless consciousness, the pure feelings of childhood. We must re-live our child-life; reproduce our child-consciousness; realize again the sinless and simple experience of childhood; become as we were when little children, — humble, docile, pure, believing,

prayerful, or we shall be unable to "receive" the kingdom of heaven, and unfitted to "enter' therein.

It is but natural, therefore, that, in the Bible, children should be represented as the very choicest of God's gifts. They are God's "heritage," — that which He gives as our very richest portion in life. How enthusiastically the Bible always speaks of them as such! We never meet with a dubious estimate of them, with a faltering congratulation. Everywhere they are spoken of rapturously and exultingly, as the very crown of earthly blessings. Like all life, they come more directly than other things from the hand of God himself. They are His precious gift, His "heritage."

We do not always so conceive of them. Pure, unselfish, and self-sacrificing as parental love is, the holiest and most perfect of all our human affections, — even it is capable of being deteriorated by circumstances, corrupted by wrong and sinful feeling. It is not every parent that receives a child as God's "heritage." A precious thing it may be to him, but not a gift from God. Other feelings of joy it may awaken, and yet not a feeling of religious gratitude; other obligations it may create, and yet not the obligation to learn and to teach

religious lessons. We may "take the child and nurse it" for our own parental joy, — for our social, or commercial, or ambitious purposes, — and yet not "nurse it for God." Every feeling of joy may be awakened by it except religious joy; every sense of obligation except religious obligation. It ought to expel all selfishness, to purify and intensify conjugal love, and to multiply it by a new affection; and yet selfishness may feel a child a restriction upon social pleasure, a tax upon worldly gain. It ought to inspire thoughtfulness and faith; — it is an intrustment so high and holy, — a soul to train for God, and heaven, and eternity; — an intrustment accompanied by great promise, connected with the highest joys and with the greatest destinies; — and yet the highest thoughts and purposes inspired by it may be selfish and earthly; or, if pious feeling is excited by it, it may be only misgiving and fear, — an unbelieving, godless feeling, that, almost as a matter of course, it will grow up wicked, and need conversion in adult life.

THESE LITTLE ONES.

REV. J. BALDWIN BROWN, B.A., LONDON.

THESE little ones! Not angels, then; but nurslings of Christ. "Take it, and bring it up for Me." I have no call to enter here into curious doctrinal discussions as to the natural estate of young children. Blessed be God, their estate in Christ has become a spiritual estate, and all their destiny has passed under the rule of His redeeming love. . . . I turn to the God-man, who gathered the infants around Him, and took them in His arms, and blessed them, and said, "*Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of heaven.*" Gladder was He, perhaps, at that moment, as the little ones clustered round His knee and pressed to His heart, than through His whole pilgrimage of sorrows. As the pure fresh morning air, in which the rosy flush is glowing, and on which the meadows have flung their dewy sweets, must the balmy breath of these little ones have played on the Saviour's strained and weary heart. Unselfish, unworldly, uncareful, unfearful, unenvious, ungrasping, unconscious, innocent! What a garden of flowers is here, with the morning light playing upon it, and

the air alive with song! Take heed that ye despise it not. It is the garden where, in the early light, you may meet the Master. He is abroad in it betimes, and here you may learn His deepest thoughts, and hear His wisest and most lovely words: "*Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.*"

Little children. The whole force of the words is here. They soon learn the battle-cries of our conflicts, and shape their puppets after the likeness of our follies and sins. But little children are Christ's own nurslings. They love, and trust, and give, after the fashion that reigns in heaven. Love is their sunlight; they ask for nothing but to bask in it. There is no glow for them when that sun in the home is clouded; there are no clouds for them when that sun in the home is unveiled. They have no possessions which they do not increase by sharing. Give a little one the gift it longs for, and straightway it toddles off in its glee to share it with its friend. Their only idea of having is sharing, till you have taught them a darker lesson. The very birds trust not more joyously the bountiful hand of the Father which is over them all. "Never mind," said a little one once to a father who had his full share of the burdens and struggles

of life, and who was lamenting to her that he was too poor to gratify some desire which she had expressed, — "never mind, papa, you have enough to go on with." Yes, I thought when I heard it, "*Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings Thou hast ordained strength, and perfected praise.*"

IDENTITY PRESERVED IN HEAVEN.

Rev. Henry Ward Beecher, New York.

A BEREAVED mother sent this query to the Rev. Henry Ward Beecher: "Last Thursday our little three-year old baby left us. She was the sunlight of our home here; and is it true that when I, too, cross the river, I shall not know her, and knowing, shall not love her?"

The following was Mr. Beecher's reply: —

"The nature of the body to which we come by resurrection is a matter purely of speculation. Nothing conclusively is taught by the Scriptures. Paul declares that *flesh and blood shall not inherit the kingdom of God.* So far as this negative reaches, the teaching is clear enough. Whatever the body is, it is *not flesh and blood.* But what conception can we form of a body except of that *flesh and blood* body

in which we have always dwelt? The Apostle seems to teach that our spiritual body, without being material, will be one which shall correspond to our earthly one. It will answer our spiritual condition just as the mortal body does our earthly state. Beyond this all is fancy and speculation. Every one trying to fashion a conception of a spiritual body, will follow the peculiarities of his own mind, or his habits of thought and the tendencies in which he has been educated. As an exercise of the imagination, such speculations may not be without some benefit. They will certainly be harmless, if one does not fall into the conceit of thinking that his idealizings are literal truth. Good men and learned men have in every age so differed among themselves as to the probable spiritual, that no one need be afraid of differing from everybody else. Even Paul could not explain the facts to us. Instead, he drew illustrations from the vegetable kingdom, implying that as a corn of wheat when planted did not come up with the same body or form, but that it developed a new form out of the seed which was planted, so it should be with the human body.

"The *main truth* to be cherished is, that we shall really live on after death, and that our identity will not be lost, but that the heavenly

state will so develop itself out of the materials gathered in the earthly, that we shall be the same beings, recognize ourselves as the same, employ the same faculties, and carry forward that very mind and disposition with which we left the world.

But shall we recognize each other in heaven? This precise question is neither put nor answered in the Sacred Scriptures. But beyond all dispute, it is implied, assumed as the very necessity of a moral state, that the *principle of memory* will exist; that the sufferings, temptations, triumphs of men over evil, — that the Divine helpfulness and fidelity displayed during the whole of men's earthly lives, — will be an occasion of *thanksgiving* and praise. Now, if memory survives, why should its action be limited to one class of experiences? Why, if we remember earthly sufferings, should we not remember those who soothed or sympathized in them? If we remember adult friends, why should we forget little children, which take hold upon the heart with a grasp even firmer than any grown person can? there is no authority for suppositions which parcel out the memory and limit its free activity.

It may be safely said, to all of that great company of mourners whose children have

gone away from them, GOD HAS TAKEN YOUR BABES: THEY ARE SAFE. They did not venture out into some great void, some vague and unexplored way, where the little wanderers were left to find their own way. If there be use for angels, surely there is none more fit and beautiful than to bear in their bosoms, and convey to the presence of the ALL-LOVING, the tender spirits of little children.

Nor do we need to doubt that there is in the Father's house a place for them, and sweet company, and perfect blessedness and gladness, innocence and friendship, such as they could never have had on earth.

Our children are cared for. He that was grieved when little children were kept from Him, who took them up in His arms, laid His hands upon them, and blessed them, — is He any less a lover of children in heaven than He was upon earth?

But shall we know them? Why not? Where is there an intimation in Scripture to this effect? It is not positively affirmed; but it is implied that men, dropping at death all that is of the flesh, will rise into the communion of heaven, carrying the same affections, sentiments, will, and intelligence that they had on earth. Otherwise, of what use are discipline, education, earthly experience? It

is the saint made perfect, not made up of a new pattern, that we shall meet in glory.

Let no mother be driven from the hope of meeting her children in heaven! Let mothers comfort themselves in believing that the loves of earth will go on in heaven, and that whatever was pure, noble, and true on earth will go on with them for ever. Among all other griefs, let not this unnecessary one arise, that you have lost your children for ever! He who keeps you for them, will keep them for you. They will be more beautiful, sweeter, more glorious in preciousness. They will be enough the same to make you glad for all the growths, additions, and refinements of their charms.

HEAVEN A VAST AND HAPPY SOCIETY.

REV. WILLIAM MORLEY PUNSHON, M.A., CANADA.

THE question of the recognition of departed friends in heaven, and special and intimate reunion with them, Scripture and reason enable us to infer with almost certain persuasion. It is implied in the fact that the resurrection is a resurrection of individuals; that it is *this* mortal that shall put on immortality. It is implied in the fact that heaven is a vast and happy

society; and it is implied in the fact that there is no unclothing of the nature that we now possess, only a clothing upon it with the garments of a brighter and more glorious immortality. Take comfort, then, those of you in whose history the dearest charities of life have been severed by the rude hand of the spoiler; those whom you have thought about as lost are not lost, except to present sight. Perhaps even now they are angel watchers, screened by a kindly providence of forgetfulness from every thing about you that would give them pain; but if you and they are alike in Jesus, and remain faithful unto the end, doubt not that you shall know them again. It were strange—don't you think?—if amid the multitudes of the heavenly hosts, the multitudes of earth's ransomed ones that we are to see in heaven, we should see all but those we most fondly and fervently long to see! Strange, if in some of our walks along the golden streets we never happened to light upon them! Strange, if we did not hear some heaven-song learned on earth trilled by some clear ringing voice that we have often heard before! Oh, depend upon it, in a realm of perfect happiness this element of happiness will not be absent,—to know and love again what we have known and loved below.

"The resurrection and the life." Oh, what heart is not thrilled by the preciousness of the promise? Whose does not throb the more joyously as he recognizes the Redeemer who brings him life? "The resurrection and the life!" Enjoyed recompense, recovered friends, — these are our hopes above. Ah! but nearer still and dearer still, enhancing each of these a thousand-fold — as every true and loyal believer thinks — with Jesus there! So shall it be in heaven, and with glad eye and with beating heart will each ransomed spirit break from its own private joy to fasten gratefully its gaze upon the Master who has purchased it, and to hear again in a pronounced immortality of comfort and of bliss, "I am the resurrection and the life."

A WALK IN GREENWOOD CEMETERY, NEW YORK.

Rev. Theodore L. Cuyler, Brooklyn.

For some years past, my favorite resort has been the beautiful and incomparable *Greenwood*. It has no rival in the world. "Nothing that I have ever seen in Europe compares with this," said Newman Hall to me as we stood on Sylvan Cliff, on a golden day of last

October (1867); and he added, "Nothing I have yet seen in America gives me such an impression of wealth, taste, and refinement as this exquisite spot." Old Jeremy Taylor says that it is good to knock often at the gates of the grave; and, truly, there is no terror in death to one who only has to look forward to bewitching Greenwood as the resting place of his body, and to Heaven as the dwelling of his ransomed soul.

Yesterday I went to Greenwood alone. How often, in times past, have I walked there with a pair of little feet tripping beside me, which now, alas! are laid under a mound of green turf and flowers. The night before the precious child departed, having wearied himself with play, he quaintly said, "My little footies are tired at both ends." Ere twenty-four hours were past, the tired feet had ended life's short journey, and were laid to the dreamless rest. Thousands and thousands of other little children are slumbering around him; for Greenwood is one vast nursery, in which cribs give place to little caskets and coffins, and no one is afraid to speak loud lest they wake up the silent sleepers. Over the dust of these sleeping treasures are hundreds of marbles which bear only such pet names as "Our Lucy," or "Our Willie," or "Sweet little

Carrie," or "Our Darling." Close beside the narrow bed, so dear to me, lie a pair of children in one spot, and on the tiny marble above them is carved this sweet verse: —

> "Under the daisies two graves are made,
> Under the daisies our treasures are laid.
> Under the daisies? It cannot be thus;
> We are sure that in heaven they wait for us."

What a celestial cheerfulness breathes in such words! How like to a guardian angel's song! There are other inscriptions scattered through the cemetery which are equally redolent of Christian hope and immortality. For example, on a stately monument is written only the name of the dead, and on the other side of the granite shaft the simple, thrilling announcement, "*The Lord is Risen!*"

Several tombs bear the single line, "*Our Mother.*" No inscription in the whole city of the dead touched me so tenderly as the one word, "Good-night," on the tomb of a young wife. Perhaps this was her last utterance as the twilight of the "valley" fell upon her advancing footsteps. Among many carved clusters of lilies, myrtles, and violets, we often discovered on the monuments of God's departed children this flower, from the Holy Spirit's own hand: "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord." This is the amaranth

which angels wreathe above the sainted dead. How fragrant it is with the love of Jesus; how dewy with precious promises; how it glitters in the light which falls from the sapphire walls of the New Jerusalem! Matchless line: that never grows old, and never stales its heavenly freshness! If there be any line which the "ministering spirits" chant above the sleeping dust of Christ's blood-bought heirs of glory, it must be this one which the Spirit taught to the beloved John. Not as a dreary dirge do they chant it; not as a melancholy requiem: it is a jubilant pæan of triumph over those who have come off more than conquerors, — whose achievements are complete, and for whom wait the "robes made white in the blood of the Lamb."

To me, the most captivating view is from Sylvan Cliff, overlooking Sylvan Water. On that green brow stands a monument which bears the figure of Faith kneeling before a cross, and beneath it the world-known lines of Toplady: —

> "Nothing in my hand I bring,
> Simply to Thy cross I cling!"

As I stood beside that graceful tablet yesterday, the light of an October sun threw its mellow radiance over the crimsoning foliage, and the green turf, and the sparkling water of

the fountain which played in the vale beneath. In the distance was the placid bay, with one stately ship resting at anchor, — a beautiful emblem of a Christian soul whose voyage had ended in the peaceful repose of the "desired haven." The sun went down into the purpling horizon as I stood there; a bird or two was twittering its evening song; the air was as silent as the unnumbered sleepers around me; and, turning toward the sacred spot where my precious dead is lying, I bade him, as of old, *Good-night!*

A THORNLESS SORROW.

D. M. MOIR, THE "DELTA" OF "BLACKWOOD."

[The following is an extract from a letter, dated Musselburgh, 8th January, 1845, addressed by Dr. Moir, on the receipt of a favorite volume, to a friend, whose child he had been attending professionally: —]

THE gift has only one drawback. Would, so far as our weak eyes can see, that it had been ordained that I should receive it from other hands than yours! This was not to be, and for wise purposes, although we see them not. The loss and the grief are to those who are left behind: to him these cannot be. Yet a little while, and the end cometh to us also;

and we, who would detain those we love, ourselves almost as quickly go.

Speaking from sad experience, a long time must yet elapse ere you and his mother will be able to look back on your deprivation with philosophic and unimpassioned minds, or be able to dissever the *what must be* from the *what might have been*. But when that time does come, you will find that the lamentation for an innocent child is a *thornless sorrow;* and that the steadfast faith, through the Redeemer, of meeting him again, and for ever, can lend a joy to grief.

POETRY.

WEE WILLIE.

D. M. Moir.

FARE-THEE-WELL, our last and fairest,
Dear wee Willie, fare-thee-well!
God, who lent thee, had recall'd thee
Back, with Him and His to dwell:
Fifteen moons their silver lustre
Only o'er thy brow hath shed,
When thy spirit join'd the seraphs,
And thy dust the dead.

Like a sunbeam, thro' our dwelling
Shone thy presence, bright and calm;
Thou didst add a zest to pleasure,
To our sorrows thou wert balm;
Brighter beam'd thine eyes than summer;
And thy first attempt at speech
Thrill'd our heartstrings with a rapture
Music ne'er could reach.

As we gazed upon thee sleeping,
With thy fine fair locks outspread,
Thou didst seem a little angel,
Who to earth from heaven had stray'd,

And, entranced, we watch'd the vision,
Half in hope, and half affright,
Lest what we deem'd ours, and earthly,
Should dissolve in light.

Snows o'ermantled hill and valley,
Sullen clouds begrimed the sky,
When the first drear doubt oppress'd us,
That our child was doom'd to die.
Through each long night-watch, the taper
Showed the hectic of his cheek;
And each anxious dawn beheld him
More worn out and weak.

Oh, the doubts, the fears, the anguish,
Of a parent's brooding heart,
When despair is hovering round it,
And yet hope will scarce depart, —
When each transient flush of fever
Omens health's returning light,
Only to involve the watchers
'Mid intenser night!

'Twas even then Destruction's angel
Shook his pinions o'er our path,
Seized the rosiest of our household,
And struck Charlie down in death!
Fearful, awful! Desolation
On our lintel set his sign;
And we turn'd from his quick death-scene,
Willie, round to thine!

Like the shot-star in blue midnight,
Like the rainbow, ray by ray,
Thou wert waning as we watch'd thee,
Loveliest in thy last decay!

As a zephyr, so serenely
  Came and went thy last low breath,
That we paused, and ask'd our spirits, —
  Is it so? Can this be death?

As the beams of Spring's first morning
  Through the silent chamber play'd,
Lifeless, in my arms I raised thee,
  And in thy small coffin laid;
Ere the day-star with the darkness
  Nine times had triumphant striven,
In one grave had met your ashes,
  And your soul's in heaven!

Five were ye, the beauteous blossoms
  Of our hopes, our hearts, our hearth;
Two asleep lie buried under, —
  Three for us yet gladden earth.
Thee, our hyacinth, gay Charlie, —
  Willie, thee our snow-drop pure, —
Back to us shall second spring-time
  Never more allure!

Yet while thinking, oh! our lost ones,
  Of how dear ye were to us,
Why should dreams of doubt and darkness
  Haunt our troubled spirits thus?
Why across the cold dim churchyard
  Flit our visions of despair?
Seated on the tomb, Faith's angel
  Says, "Ye are not there!"

Where, then, are ye? With the Saviour
  Blest, for ever blest, are ye,
'Mid the sinless little children,
  Who have heard His "Come to me!"

'Yond the shades of death's dark valley
Now ye lean upon His breast,
Where the wicked dare not enter,
And the weary rest.

We are wicked — we are weary —
For us pray and for us plead;
God who ever hears the sinless,
May through you the sinful heed:
Pray that, through the Mediator,
All our faults may be forgiven;
Plead that ye be sent to greet us
At the gates of heaven!

WE ARE SEVEN.

WM. WORDSWORTH.

. . . A SIMPLE child
That lightly draws its breath
And feels its life in every limb,
What should it know of death?

I met a little cottage girl;
She was eight years old, she said;
Her hair was thick with many a curl
That clustered round her head.

She had a rustic, woodland air,
And she was wildly clad:
Her eyes were fair and very fair;
Her beauty made me glad.

"Sisters and brothers, little maid,
How many may you be?"
"How many? — Seven in all," she said,
And wondering looked at me.

"And where are they? I pray you, tell,"
She answered, "Seven are we;
And two of us at Conway dwell,
And two are gone to sea:

"Two of us in the churchyard lie,
My sister and my brother;
And in the churchyard cottage, I
Dwell near them with my mother."

"You say that two at Conway dwell,
And two are gone to sea,
Yet ye are seven! — I pray you tell,
Sweet maid, how this may be."

Then did the little maid reply,
"Seven boys and girls are we;
Two of us in the churchyard lie,
Beneath the churchyard tree."

"You run about, my little maid,
Your limbs they are alive;
If two are in the churchyard laid,
Then ye are only five."

"Their graves are green, they may be seen,"
The little maid replied,
"Twelve steps or more from my mother's door,
And they are side by side.

"My stockings there I often knit,
My kerchief there I hem;
And there upon the ground I sit,
And sing a song to them.

"And often after sunset, Sir,
When it is light and fair,
I take my little porringer,
And eat my supper there.

"The first that died was sister Jane;
In bed she moaning lay,
Till God released her of her pain;
And then she went away.

"So in the churchyard she was laid;
And, when the grass was dry,
Together round her grave we played,
My brother John and I.

"And when the ground was white with snow,
And I could run and slide,
My brother John was forced to go,
And he lies by her side."

"How many are you, then," said I,
"If they two are in heaven?"
Quick was the little maid's reply,
"O master! we are seven."

"But they are dead; those two are dead:
Their spirits are in heaven!"
'Twas throwing words away; for still
The little maid would have her will,
And said, "Nay, we are seven!"

THE GRANDMOTHER.

ALFRED TENNYSON.

So Willy has gone, my beauty, my eldest-born, my flower;
But how can I weep for Willy, he has but gone for an hour, —
Gone for a minute, my son, from this room into the next;
I, too, shall go in a minute. What time have I to be vext?

ENOCH ARDEN.

ALFRED TENNYSON.

[Enoch Arden having gone to sea, after many years' absence returns to his native place, and, when near his own end, speaks as follows to a friend of his departed infant:—]

AND now there is but one of all my blood,
Who will embrace me in the world-to-be:
This is his hair; she cut it off and gave it,
And I have borne it with me all these years,
And thought to bear it with me to my grave;
But now my mind is changed, for I shall see him,
My babe, in bliss; wherefore, when I am gone,
Take, give her this, for it may comfort her:
It will moreover be a token to her
That I am he.

BERKELEY AND FLORENCE COLERIDGE.

SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE.

O FRAIL as sweet! twin buds, too rath to bear
The winter's unkind air;
O gifts beyond all price! no sooner given
Than straight required by Heaven;
Match'd jewels, vainly for a moment lent
To deck my brow, or sent
Untainted from the earth, as Christ's, to soar,
And add two spirits more
To that dread band seraphic, that doth lie
Beneath the Almighty's eye;
Glorious the thought,—yet, ah! my babes, ah! still
A father's heart ye fill;
Though cold ye lie in earth, though gentle death
Hath sucked your balmy breath,

And the last kiss which your fair cheeks I gave
Is buried in yon grave.
No tears, no tears, — I wish them not again.
To die for them was vain,
Ere Doubt, or Fear, or Woe, or act of Sin
Had marr'd God's light within.

UNDYING LOVE.

ROBERT SOUTHEY, LL.D.

THEY sin who tell us Love can die,
With life all other passions fly, —
All others are but vanity.
In heaven ambition cannot dwell,
Nor avarice in the vaults of hell;
Earthly these passions of the earth,
They perish where they have their birth;
But Love is indestructible:
Its holy flame for ever burneth,
From heaven it came, to heaven returneth.
Too oft on earth a troubled guest,
At times deceived, at times opprest,
It here is tried and purified,
Then hath in heaven its perfect rest;
It soweth here with toil and care,
But the harvest time of Love is there.
Oh! when a mother meets on high
The babe she lost in infancy,
Hath she not then, for pains and fears,
The day of woe, the watchful night,
For all her sorrow, all her tears,
An over-payment of delight?

A FLOWER TRANSPLANTED.

RÒBERT BURNS.

(*On an only Daughter who died in Autumn* 1795.)

OH, sweet be thy sleep in the land of the grave,
My dear little angel, for ever!
For ever? — Oh, no! let not man be a slave,
His hopes from existence to sever.

Though cold be the clay where thou pillow'st thy head,
In the dark silent mansions of sorrow,
The spring shall return to thy low narrow bed,
Like the beam of the day-star to-morrow.

The flower stem shall bloom like thy sweet seraph form,
Ere the spoiler had nipt thee in blossom,
When thou shrunk'st from the scowl of the loud winter storm,
And nestled thee close to that bosom.

Oh, still I behold thee, all lovely in death,
Reclined in the lap of thy mother,
When the tear trickled bright, when the short stifled breath
Told how dear ye were aye to each other.

My child, thou art gone to the home of thy rest,
Where suffering no longer can harm ye,
Where the songs of the good, where the hymns of the blest,
Through an endless existence shall charm thee.

ROBERT BURNS.

HERE lies a rose, a budding rose,
Blasted before its bloom;
Whose innocence did sweets disclose
Beyond that flower's perfume.

To those who for her loss are griev'd
This consolation's given, —
She's from a world of woe receiv'd
And blooms a rose in Heaven.

SONG OF THE CHURCHYARD CHILDREN.

THOMAS AIRD, DUMFRIES.

Lo! through the churchyard comes a company sweet
Of ghosted infants, — who has loosed their feet?
Linked hand in hand, this way they glide along;
But list their softly-modulated song: —

Our good Lord Christ on high
Has let us forth a space,
To see the moonlit place
Where our little bodies lie.
Back He will call us, at His dear command
We'll run again unto the happy land.

O'er each unblemished head
No thunder-cloud unsheaths its terrors red;
Mild touching gleams those beauteous fields invest,
Won from the kingdoms of perpetual rest.

Stony Enchantment there,
Nor Divination frights;
Nor hoary witch with her blue lights,
And caldron's swarming glare;
There are no muttered spells,
Envy, nor Clamor loud;
Nor Hatred, on whose head for ever dwells
A sullen cloud.
There is no fiend's dissembling,
Nor the deep-furrowed garment of trembling,
But the robes of lucid air,
Oh, all is good and fair!

Unto the Lamb we'll sing,
Who gives us each glad thing:
For Mercy sits with Him upon His throne;
For there His gentle keeping is revealed,
O'er each young head select a glory and a shield.
Wide be His praises known!

And in the end of days,
Our little heads He'll raise
Unto Himself, unto His bosom dear,
Far from the outcast fear
Of them — oh, woe! — who make their beds in fire.
Sons shall we be of the celestial prime,
Breathing the air of Heaven's delicious clime,
Walking in white attire,
With God Himself sublime.

WEEP NOT FOR HER!

"DELTA," IN "BLACKWOOD'S MAGAZINE," WRITTEN IN 1850.

WEEP not for her! Oh, she was far too fair,
Too pure to dwell on this guilt-tainted earth!
The sinless glory, and the golden air
Of Zion, seemed to claim her from her birth, —
A spirit wandering from its native zone:
Which soon discov'ring took her for its own:
Weep not for her!

Weep not for her! Her span was like the sky;
Whose thousand stars shine beautiful and bright;
Like flowers that know not what it is to die!
Like long-link'd shadeless months of Polar light;
Like music floating o'er a waveless lake,
While Echo answers from the flowery brake,
Weep not for her!

Weep not for her! She died in early youth,
Ere hope had lost its rich romantic hues;
When human bosoms seem'd the homes of truth,
And earth still gleam'd with beauty's radiant dews,
Her summer prime waned not to days that freeze;
Her wine of life was run not to the lees;
Weep not for her!

Weep not for her! By fleet or slow decay,
It never griev'd her bosom's core to mark
The playmates of her childhood wane away,
Her prospects wither, or her hopes grow dark;
Translated by her God, with spirits shriven,
She passed as 'twere in smiles from earth to heaven:
Weep not for her!

Weep not for her! It was not hers to feel
The miseries that corrode amassing years,
'Gainst dreams of baffled bliss the heart to steel,
To wander sad down Age's vale of tears,
As whirl the wither'd leaves from Friendship's tree,
And on earth's wintry world alone to be:
Weep not for her!

Weep not for her! She is an angel now,
And treads the sapphire floors of Paradise,—
All darkness wiped from her refulgent brow,
Sin, sorrow, suffering, banished from her eyes;
Victorious over death, to her appear
The vista'd joys of Heaven's eternal year:
Weep not for her!

Weep not for her! Her memory is the shrine
Of pleasing thoughts, soft as the scent of flowers,
Calm as on windless eve the sun's decline,
Sweet as the song of birds among the bowers,
Rich as a rainbow with its hues of light,
Pure as the moonshine of an autumn night:
Weep not for her!

Weep not for her! There is no cause for woe;
But rather nerve the spirit, that it walk
Unshrinking o'er the thorny paths below,
And from earth's low defilements keep thee back:
So, when a few fleet severing years have flown,
She'll meet thee at Heaven's gate, and lead thee on!
Weep not for her!

HOME TRIAL.

JAMES HEDDERWICK, EDITOR OF "THE GLASGOW CITIZEN."

I NEVER thought of him and death, so far apart they seem'd, —
The love that would have died to save of danger scarcely dream'd;
Too late the fear that prompted help, too late the yearning care;
Yet who that saw his lustrous face could doubt that death would spare?

Oh, could my pangs have lightened his, or eased his failing breath,
I would have drain'd the bitter cup, had every drop been death:
But, though I drank his agony, until my heart o'erflow'd,
From off the little sufferer's breast I could not lift the load.

It weigh'd him down; I saw him sink away from life and me;
Grief waded in the gentlest eyes; my own could scarcely see:
He look'd so calm, he felt so cold, — all hope, all life had fled, —
A cry of pain would have been sweet, but pain itself was dead.

They took his form of innocence, and stretch'd it out alone;
Tears fell upon the pulseless clay, like rain-drops upon stone;
They closed his eyes of beauty, for their glory was o'ercast,
And sorrow drew its deepest shade from gladness that was past.

The sun was lazy in the heavens that day our darling died,
And longer wore away the night we miss'd him from our side;
All sleep was scared by weary sobs from one wild heart and mine, —
The only sleep in all the house, my innocent! was thine.

I made mad inquest of the skies; I breathed an inward psalm:
The stars burn'd incense at God's feet: I grew more strong and calm:
I utter'd brave and soothing words, as was my manhood's part,
Then hurried speechlessly away to hide the father's heart.

His coffin-crib a soft hand deck'd with flowers of sweetest scent;
To beauty and decay akin, their living breath they lent;
But never could they breath impart whence other breath had flown:
Ah me! affection's helplessness, when death has claim'd his own!

Our child was now God's holy child, yet still he linger'd here;
Oh, could we but have kept him thus, the pictured dust how dear!

But soon the grave its summons writ upon the black'ning lips;
And wheresoe'er I look'd for light, I only saw eclipse.

There was no loveliness in flowers, in human eyes, or books;
Dear household faces flitted round with pain'd and ghastly looks;
A shadow muffled like a mist the splendors of the day,
And sorrow speaking to the night took all its stars away.

No more might fair hands fondly smooth the pillow for his head;
The joyless task was now all mine to lay him in his bed:
I laid him in his earth-cold bed, and buried with him there
The hope that trembling on its knees expired 'mid broken prayer.

As in the round and beauteous bud the promise we may trace
Of the unfolded perfect flower, I used to read his face,
Till love grown rash in prophecy foretold him brave and strong, —
A battler for the true and right, a trampler on the wrong.

Had I my life to live again, I know how I would live,
And all the wisdom I have learn'd, to him I meant to give, —
To bless his glowing boyhood with the ripeness of my age,
And train him up a better man, to tread a nobler stage:

To train him up a perfect man, the crown of life to win,
With kingly chastity of thought to awe rebellious sin,
With all the light thrown forward of a bright, unwasted youth, —
A soul as pure as cloister'd love, and strong as castled truth.

His lot, how happy had it been, with age to guard and guide!
And yet he might have proved a sire, — his darling might have died:
If so, I need not canvass more the heavens why this should be, —
Ah! better to be early dead, than live to weep like me!

Tears! tears! ye never can be his! The thought my own should dry;
Yet other thoughts and sadder thoughts still brood the fountains by:
Why was a treasure to me given, for death so soon to take?
Oh, may the answer be, — a heart grown purer for his sake!

Striving one day to be myself, of living things I thought,
And musing on my blessings left, a calm was in me wrought,
Till gliding to my infant's room, all noiselessly I stept,
And shudder'd as remembrance woke that there no more he slept.

The world is emptied of my child, yet crowded with his loss;
The silence and the vacancy my steps for ever cross;
With every sound of merriment my sorrow is at strife,
And happy infants stare at me, like pictures wanting life.

My eye grows greedy of distress; what healthless looks I meet!
What tear-writ tales of anguish in the harsh, unheeding street!
Yet while the wasting griefs I trace in other hearts that dwell,
The sympathy I fain would give, my own heart sootheth well.

Again, to dwarf my woe, I dream of war and shipwreck dire,
Of choking pit, of crashing train, of fierce o'ermastering fire:
Alas! the thousand frantic ills, which some are doomed to prove;
O God! how sweetly died my child 'midst ministries of love!

So gently wail, ye pleasant winds! and weep, ye silver showers!
Thou shadow of the cypress tree lie lightly on the flowers!
The summer has its mildews, and the daylight has its clouds,
And some put on their marriage robes, while some are clad in shrouds.

Thus o'er the gleaming track of life the generations run:
Do they to clodded darkness pass, or to a brighter sun?
Does nothing spiritual ascend? can soul become a sod?
Is man on earth an orphan? is creation void of God?

Is the resplendent cope of night deserted, drear, and dead?
Does no great ear lean down to catch the prayers by good men said?
Is groan of murder'd patriot, or shout of martyr'd saint,
As idle as on savage shores the homeless ocean's plaint?

Above the lands that front the sky in the illumined east,
The stars hang low and large, like lamps at some immortal feast,
And from those lands so near to heaven have wondrous voices come
Of God's eternal fatherhood, and man's celestial home.

I marvel, then, dear child of mine! whom 'neath the grass
I laid,
If wing'd and bright, a spirit now, though scarcely purer
made,
Thou liv'st in His almighty care, in mansions of the skies!
Oh say, wilt thou come down to me, or I to thee arise?

Great mysteries are round thee, child! unknown or dim
to me,
But yet I cannot dread the death made beautiful by thee;
The path thy little feet have trod I may not fear to tread,
And so I follow in the dark, as by an angel led.

OUR FIRST TAKEN.

REV. WALTER C. SMITH, D.D., GLASGOW.

SIT close beside me, dearest wife;
We are together, if alone;
The dew upon the bloom of life
Is gathered, and the bloom is gone;
And part of us is in the grave,
And part is in the heaven above;
But stronger is the tie we have
In mingled cords of grief and love.

Sit very near, and let me dry
This tear that trickles down thy cheek,
And this that trembles in thine eye;
For it is time that we should speak:
The choking stupor of the hour
Is past, when weeping was relief;
Now yield thee to a gentler power, —
The tender memory of grief.

Let's talk of her, — our little one
  Who walks above the milky way,
Arrayed in glory like the sun
  That lightens the eternal day;
The little gift that we did make
  To God, by whom the boon was given, —
He wished it, deeming she would take
  Our hearts away with her to heaven.

Remember that sweet time when hope
  Sat brooding o'er its future joy,
And low, fond laughter wakened up
  With bets upon a girl or boy;
And little caps in secret sewn,
  Were hid in many a quiet nook:
You knew the secret to be known,
  Yet hid them with a guilty look.

Remember all the gush of thought
  When first upon your arm she lay,
And all the pain was all forgot,
  And all the fears were smiled away;
And looking on her helplessness
  Awakened strong resolve in you,
And mother-love and tender grace;
  And all was beautiful and new.

For you were sure, a week before,
  That you should never live to see
A baby laughing on the floor,
  Or placid lying on the knee,
Or laid on my ungainly hand
  That always feared to let her slip,
Or held up, with a fond command,
  For pressure of a father's lip.

O sweet bud, flowering dewy bright
To crown our love's rejoicing stem!
O great eyes wondering in their light,
With long dark lashes fringing them!
And over these the forehead broad,
And then her full and parted lips
And rounded chin, meet for a god,
And pink shells on her finger-tips!

Most beautiful her life! and we
Were even too full of happiness:
As dewy flowers hang droopingly,
O'erburdened with the weight of bliss,
And, fearful lest the treasure spill,
Close up their petals to the light,
So we forgot all, good or ill,
To clasp to us that dear delight.

Remember how we noted all
Her little looks and winning ways,
And how she let her eyelids fall
As I was wont in wooing days;
And held her little finger up
In curious mimicry of mine;
But when the smile was on her lip,
Lo! all the beaming face was thine.

Oh, say not she was only seen,
Like song-bird lighting on the tree,
A moment, while the leaves were green,
Filling the boughs with melody,
And then, when hope arose serene,
She left us sadder than before;
And better she had never been,
Than leave us stricken to deplore.

And was it nothing then to feel
A mother's love, and do her part,
While soft hands o'er the bosom steal,
And soft cheeks press against the heart?
Nay, let us kneel together, love,
And bow the head, and kiss the rod;
We gave an heir to heaven above,
A child to praise the Christ of God.

He would have infant trebles ringing
The glories of the great I AM;
He would have childish voices singing
The hallelujahs of the Lamb;
And shall we faint in grief's desire
Because this grace to us is given,
To have a babe amid the choir
White-robed around the throne of heaven?

We had a joy unto us given
Transcending any earthly pleasance;
We had a messenger from heaven;
Let us be better for her presence.
Our mother earth where she is laid
Is dearer to my heart for her:
We have such kindred with the dead,
The very grave is lightsomer.

THE CHILD'S ANGEL.

Rev. W. B. Robertson, D.D., Irvine, Ayrshire.

Elder sister, elder brother,
Come and go around the mother,
As she bids them come and go;
But the babe in her embrace
Rests and gazes on her face,
And is most happy so.

Dropping from her lips and eyes,
Soft and hidden harmonies
  Steal into her infant's heart:
Mirror'd in clear depths below,
Gleams of mystic beauty flow,
  And fix, and ne'er depart.

Christ, our Lord, in His evangel,
Tells us how the young child's angel,
  In the world of heavenly rest,
Gazes in enraptured trance
On His Father's countenance,
  And is supremely blest.

Other angels come and go,
As the Lord will, to and fro:
  Some to earth, on missions fleet,
Some stand singing, some are winging
Their swift flight, and homeward bringing
  The saved to Jesus' feet.

Angel hosts all mingling, changing,
Circle above circle ranging,
  Marshalling, throng God's holy place:
But the children's angels, dearest
To the Father's heart, come nearest, —
  They always see His face.

And oh! if earthly beauty, beaming
From frail mother's face, rush streaming
  Deep into her infant's heart, —
What rare beauty must theirs be,
Heavenly God, who gaze on Thee,
  Who see Thee as Thou art!

THE DEPARTED NIGH.

REV. W. B. ROBERTSON, D. D., IRVINE.

DEPARTED, say we? is it
Departed, or Come Nigh?
Dear friends in Christ more visit
Than leave us when they die.
What thin veil still may hide them
Some little sickness rends,
And, lo! we stand beside them;
Are they *departed* friends?

Their dews on Zion mountain
Our Hermon hills bedew;
Their river from the Fountain
Flows down to meet us, too.
The oil on the head, and under,
Down to the skirts hath run;
And though we seem asunder,
We still in Christ are one.

The many tides of ocean
Are one vast tidal wave,
That sweeps, in landward motion,
Alike to coast and cave;
And Life, from Christ outflowing,
Is one wave evermore,
To earth's dark caverns going,
Or heaven's bright pearly shore.

Hail, perfected immortals!
Even now we bid you hail!
We at the blood-stained portals,
And *ye* within the veil!
The thin cloud-veil between us
Is mere dissolving breath,
One heavens surround, and screen us;
And where art thou, O Death?

THE INFANT CHOIR IN HEAVEN.

JAMES MONTGOMERY, SHEFFIELD.

HAPPY, thrice happy were they thus to die,
Rather than grow into such men and women,—
Such fiends incarnate as that felon sire
Who dug its grave before his child was born;
Such miserable wretches as that mother
Whose tender mercies were so dreadly cruel!
I saw their infant's spirit rise to heaven,
Caught from its birth up to the throne of God;
There, thousands and ten thousands I beheld
Of innocents like this, that died untimely,
By violence of their unnatural kin,
Or by the mercy of that gracious Power,
Who gave them being, taking what He gave
Ere they could sin or suffer like their parents.
I saw them in white raiment, crowned with flowers,
On the fair banks of that resplendent river
Whose streams make glad the city of our God,—
Water of Life as clear as crystal, welling
Forth from the throne itself, and visiting
Fields of a Paradise that ne'er was lost;
Where yet the Tree of Life immortal grows,
And bears its monthly fruits, twelve kinds of fruit,
Each in its season, food of saints and angels;
Whose leaves are for the healing of the nations.
Beneath the shadow of its blessed boughs
I mark'd those rescued infants, in their schools,
By spirits of just men made perfect, taught
The glorious lessons of Almighty Love,
Which brought them thither in the readiest path
From the world's wilderness of dire temptations,
Securing thus their everlasting weal.
Yea, in the rapture of that hour, though songs
Of cherubim to golden lyres and trumpets,
And the redeemed upon the sea of glass,

With voices like the sound of many waters,
Came on mine ear, whose secret cells were open'd
To entertain celestial harmonies, —
The small, sweet accents of those little children,
Pouring out all the gladness of their souls
In love, joy, gratitude, and praise to Him, —
Him who had lov'd and wash'd them in His blood;
These were to me the most transporting strains
Amidst the hallelujahs of all Heaven.
Though lost awhile in that amazing chorus
Around the throne, at happy intervals
The shrill hosannas of the infant choir,
Singing in that eternal temple, brought
Tears to mine eye, whilst seraphs had been glad
To weep, could they have felt the sympathy
That melted all my soul, when I beheld
How condescending Deity thus deign'd,
Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings here,
To perfect His high praise; — the harp of heaven
Had lack'd its least but not its meanest string,
Had children not been taught to play upon it,
And sing, from feelings all their own, what men
Nor angels can conceive of creatures, born
Under the curse, yet from the curse redeem'd,
And placed at once beyond the power to fall, —
Safety which men nor angels ever knew,
Till ranks of these, and all of those had fallen.

"SLEEP SOFTLY."

RICHARD CHENEVIX TRENCH, D.D., ARCHBISHOP OF DUBLIN.

No mother's eye beside thee wakes to-night,
No taper burns beside thy lonely bed;
Darkling thou liest, hidden out of sight,
And none are near thee but the silent dead.

How cheerly glows this hearth, yet glows in vain,
For we uncheered beside it sit alone,
And listen to the wild and beating rain
In angry gusts against our casement blown:

And though we nothing speak, yet well I know
That both our hearts are there, where thou dost keep
Within thy narrow chamber far below,
For the first time unwatched, thy lonely sleep:

Oh, no, not thou! — and we our faith deny,
This thought allowing: — thou, removed from harms,
In Abraham's bosom dost securely lie, —
Oh! not in Abraham's, — in a Saviour's arms, —

In that dear Lord's who in thy worst distress,
Thy bitterest anguish, gave thee, dearest child,
Still to abide in perfect gentleness,
And like an angel to be meek and mild.

Sweet corn of wheat, committed to the ground
To die, and live, and bear more precious ear;
While in the heart of earth thy Saviour found
His place of rest, for thee we will not fear.

Sleep softly, till that blessed rain and dew,
Down lighting upon earth, such change shall bring,
That all its fields of death shall laugh anew,
Yea, with a living harvest laugh and sing.

MORAVIAN HYMN.

ARCHBISHOP TRENCH.

WHERE is this infant? it is gone.
To whom? To Christ, its Saviour true.
What does He for it? He goes on
As He has ever done, to do:

He blesses, He embraces without end,
And to all children proves the tenderest friend.

He loves to have the little ones
  Upon His lap quite close and near;
And thus their glass so swiftly runs,
  And they so little while are near.
He gave, — He takes them when He thinks it best
For them to come to Him and take their rest.

However, 'tis a great delight
  Awhile to see such little princes,
All drest in linen fine and white, —
  A beauty which escapes the senses:
The pure Lamb dwells in them, — His majesty
Makes their sweet eyes to sparkle gloriously.

Be therefore thanked, thou dearest Lamb,
  That we this precious child have seen,
And that Thy blood and Jesus' name
  To it a glittering robe hath been:
We thank Thee too that Thou hast brought it home,
That it so soon all dangers hath o'ercome.

Dear child, so live thou happily
  In Christ, who was thy faith's beginner:
Rejoice in Him eternally
  With each redeemed and happy sinner;
We bury thee in hope, — the Lamb once slain
Will raise, and we shall see thee yet again.

THE WHITE DOVES.

ARCHBISHOP TRENCH.

FAIR sight are ye, white doves, which refuge sure
  Are finding in a tall rock's cloven side:
Types of a fairer thing, of children pure,
  Which early did their lives with Jesus hide.

THE CHILD IN PARADISE.

HENRY ALFORD, D.D., DEAN OF CANTERBURY.

(*Sacred to the Memory of Clement Henry Oke Alford.*)

MY blessed child! Last Sunday morn,
That feast of all the year,
We held thee in our wearied arms,
Distraught with hope and fear:

We soothed thee with caresses fond;
With words, alas, how vain!
We strove to still thy piercing moans,
And set to sleep thy pain.

But still the thought would ever rise
In stern reality,
Ill balanced by returning hope,
That our dear child would die.

Another Sunday morn is come,
But all is altered now:
Pilgrims upon this earth are we,
A blessed saint art thou.

No mother now beside thy bed
Lets fall her burning tears;
No father bathes thy fevered head,
Nor whispers rising fears.

That form so fair, those eyes so bright,
Are laid in hallowed ground,
And over them the churchyard chimes
A peaceful requiem sound.

But thou, dear, glorious child, art fled,
And on thy Saviour's breast
Dost for the resurrection-morn
In holy quiet rest.

Oh, never would we change this hour,
With blessed hope so bright,
For that sad day of fainting prayers,
For that last anxious night.

The earth and all that is therein
Are hallowed to us now;
In work, at rest, at home, abroad,
Where'er we turn art thou.

Thou blessed child in Paradise,
Safe fled from sin and pain;
Oh, not for all thy life could give
Shouldst thou be here again.

FAITH.

HENRY ALFORD, D.D.

I THOUGHT, if I could go and stand
Beside our dear one's grave in Faith,
And lift the voice and stretch the hand,
And call on Him who conquered death;

And then, in my reliance deep,
Bid the new-buried corpse come forth, —
The call of faith would break that sleep,
And animate that lifeless earth.

But while I pondered thus, within
A gentle voice reminded me
That I was weak, and soiled with sin, —
That faith must strong and holy be.

"Raise up the deadness of thy soul,
Be pure and watch, and fast and pray;
Then mayest thou bid the sick be whole,
Then shall the dead thy voice obey."

Lord God the Spirit! purify
My thoughts, bind fast my life to Thee;
So shall I meet my babe on high,
Though he may not return to me.

LACRYMÆ PATERNÆ.

HENRY ALFORD, D.D. (1850).

HERE take thy stand; within this chamber lone
That looks upon the unfathomable blue
Of the blest ocean, take thy stand awhile, —
Ah, mournful task! and watch yon fading face
So lately lit with love and eager joy
Now blank, but beautiful! Trace thou those lines
Which death had spared; build up that noble brow,
Part the fair hair, and mimic with thy brush
That curl, whose very flexure tells of him.
Precious thine art, — God's gift, — how often said,
How never felt till now! This autumn day
We leave thee here with him. Death, cease thy work!
Forget thy course, Decay! One favoring hour
Befriend our wish, how earnest, but how vain!
O sweet refreshment to the wearied heart,
This converse with the unalterable dead!
I know not where, nor rightly what thou art:
I only know that thou art blest and bright,
Unfading and mine own: and thus I sit
Long pensive hours alone, scarce stirred in thought,
Scanning thy presence through a mist of tears.
Others may change, but thou shalt never change:

Forgetfulness, and distance, and neglect,
The chills of earthly love — the stealthy pace
Of summer-stealing age — these touch not thee;
That heart of thine, fresh well of living love,
Hadst thou been here, might in long years have failed,
Or poured on thankless fields its errant streams,
Or poured away (such sad vicissitudes
We learn to look for, who live long on earth)
Else-whither in abundance, sparing here
Few drops and scant. But now, beloved one,
That everlasting fount is all our own.
They tell me, that we soon shall meet again;
That some have heard the mighty chariot wheels
Roar in the distance; that the world's salt tears
Are cleaving their last furrows in her cheeks.
It may be so: I know not. Oft the ear,
Attent and eager for some coming friend,
Construes each breeze among the vocal boughs
Into the tokens of his wished approach.
But this I know: HE liveth, and shall stand
Upon this earth; and round Him, thick as waves
That laugh with light at noon, uncounted hosts
Of His redeemed: and this I further know:
Then shall I see thee, — amidst all that band,
Know thee unsought, and, midst a thousand joys
Ineffable, our own shall we possess,
Clasped heart to heart and looking eye to eye.
Oh, dawn, millennial day! Come, blessed morn!
Appear, Desire of Nations! rend Thy heavens,
And stand revealed, upon thy chosen hill!

THE FAIREST FLOWER.

JOHN MILTON.

O FAIREST flower, no sooner blown but blasted,
Soft silken primrose fading timelessly,
Summer's chief honor, if thou hadst out-lasted
Bleak Winter's force that made thy blossom dry;
For he being amorous on that lovely die
That did thy cheek envermeil, thought to kiss,
But kill'd, alas, and then bewailed his fatal bliss.

. . . . . .

Yet can I not persuade me thou art dead,
Or that thy corse corrupts in earth's dark womb,
Or that thy beauties lie in wormy bed,
Hid from the world in a low delved tomb;
Could Heaven, for pity, thee so strictly doom?
Oh, no! for something in thy face did shine
Above mortality, that show'd thou wast divine.

Resolve me, then, O Soul most surely bless'd
(If so it be that thou these plaints dost hear),
Tell me, bright Spirit, where'er thou hoverest,
Whether above that high first-moving sphere,
Or in the Elysian fields (if such there were);
Oh, say me true, if thou wert mortal wight,
And why from us so quickly thou didst take thy flight?

Wert thou some star which from the ruin'd roof
Of shak'd Olympus by mischance didst fall;
Which careful Jove in nature's true behoof
Took up, and in fit place did reinstall?
Or did of late Earth's sons besiege the wall
Of sheeny Heaven, and thou, some goddess, fled
Amongst us here below to hide thy nectar'd head?

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Or wert thou that just maid, who once before
Forsook the hated earth, oh, tell me sooth,
And cam'st again to visit us once more?
Or wert thou Mercy, that sweet-smiling Youth?
Or that crown'd matron sage, white-robed Truth?
  Or any other of that heavenly brood
Let down in cloudy throne to do the world some good?

Or wert thou of the golden-winged host
Who, having clad thyself in human weed,
To earth from thy prefixed seat didst post,
And after short abode fly back with speed,
As if to show what creatures Heaven doth breed;
  Thereby to set the hearts of men on fire
To scorn the sordid world, and unto Heaven aspire?

But oh! why didst thou not stay here below
To bless us with thy Heaven-lov'd innocence,
To slake His wrath whom sin had made our foe,
To turn swift-rushing black perdition hence?
Or drive away the slaughtering pestilence,
  To stand 'twixt us and our deserved smart?
But thou canst best perform that office where thou art.

Then thou the mother of so sweet a child
Her false imagined loss cease to lament,
Aud wisely learn to curb thy sorrows wild;
Think what a present thou to God hast sent,
And render Him with patience what He lent;
  This if thou do, He will an offspring give,
That till the world's last end shall make thy name to live.*

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* John Milton was born in London, on the 9th of December, 1608, and died there on Sunday, the 8th of November, 1675, aged 67 years.

"STILL THOU ART MINE OWN."

PAUL GERHARDT.* (WRITTEN IN 1650.)

THOU'RT mine, yes, still thou art mine own!
Who tells me thou art lost?
But yet thou art not mine alone;
I own that He who crossed
My hopes has greatest right in thee;
Yea, though He ask and take from me
Thee, O my son, my heart's delight,
My wish, my thought by day and night.

Ah might I wish, ah might I choose,
Then thou, my Star, shouldst live,
And gladly for thy sake I'd lose
All else that life can give.
Oh, fain I'd say, Abide with me,
The sunshine of my house to be;
No other joy but this I crave,
To love thee, darling, to my grave!

Thus saith my heart, and means it well,
God meaneth better still:
My love is more than words can tell,
His love is greater still;
I am a father, He the Head
And Crown of fathers, whence is shed
The life and love from which have sprung
All blessed ties in old and young.

I long for thee my son, my own,
And He who once hath given,
Will have thee now beside His throne,
To live with Him in heaven.

* Gerhardt was an eminent commentator of the Lutheran Church in Germany, and the Prince of German hymn-writers.

I cry, Alas! my light, my child!
But God hath welcome on him smiled,
And said, "My child, I keep thee near,
For there is nought but gladness here."

O blessed word, O deep decree,
More holy than we think!
With God no grief or woe can be,
No bitter cup to drink,
No sickening hopes, no want nor care,
No hurt can ever reach him there;
Yes, in that Father's sheltered home
I know that sorrow cannot come.

We pass our nights in wakeful thought
For our dear children's sake;
All day our anxious toil hath sought
How best for them to make
A future safe from care or need,
Yet seldom do our schemes succeed;
How rarely does their future prove
What we had plann'd for those we love!

How many a child of promise bright
Ere now hath gone astray,
By ill example taught to slight
And quit Christ's holy way.
Oh, fearful the reward is then,
The wrath of God, the scorn of men!
The bitterest tears by mortal shed
Are his who mourns a child misled.

But now I need not fear for thee,
Where thou art, all is well;
For thou thy Father's face dost see,
With Jesus thou dost dwell!

Yes, cloudless joys around him shine,
His heart shall never ache like mine,
He sees the radiant armies glow,
That keep and guide us here below:

He hears their singing evermore,
  His little voice too sings,
He drinks of wisdom's deepest lore,
  He speaks of secret things,
That we can never see or know
Howe'er we seek or strive below,
While yet amid the mists we stand
That veil this dark and tearful land.

Oh that I could but watch afar,
  And hearken but awhile,
To that sweet song that hath no jar,
  And see his heavenly smile
As he doth praise the holy God
Who made him pure for that abode!
In tears of joy full well I know
This burden'd heart would overflow.

And I should say, Stay there, my son,
  My wild laments are o'er;
Oh, well for thee that thou hast won,
  I call thee back no more!
But come, thou fiery chariot, come,
And bear me swiftly to that home,
Where he with many a loved one dwells,
And evermore of gladness tells!

Then be it as my Father wills,
  I will not weep for thee:
Thou livest, joy thy spirit fills,
  Pure sunshine thou dost see,

The sunshine of eternal rest:
Abide, my child, where thou art, blest;
I with our friends will onward fare,
And, when God wills, shall find thee there.

"GO HENCE, MY CHILD."

GOTTFRIED HOFFMANN (1658).

Translated from the German by REV. JOHN GUTHRIE, M.A., *Glasgow.*

Go hence, my child!
God calls thee to depart
From out this world of woe.
I weep full sore; thy death has wrung my heart;
But since God wills it so,
I'll put all vain laments away,
And try, with soul resigned, to say,
Go hence, my child!

Go hence, my child!
To me thou wert but lent
Awhile on earth to roam;
And now the summons comes; thy day is spent;
And thou must hie thee home.
Then go, for 'tis God's wise decree,
And as He wills, so let it be:
Go hence, my child!

Go hence, my child!
Thou find'st in heaven that rest
Which earth could not bestow;
'Tis only with thy God thou canst be blest,
Without one trace of woe.
Here we must grieve and inly pine,
There endless life and bliss are thine:
Go hence, my child!

Go hence, my child!
We follow all apace,
As God may bid us go.
Forth didst thou haste, ere yet earth's bitterness
Dashed thy young life below.
A life prolonged is lingering pain,
An early death is speedy gain:
Go hence, my child!

Go hence, my child!
Already angels wait
To bear thy spirit bright,
Where God's dear Son shall meet thee at heaven's gate,
And crown thy brows with light.
'Tis well, thy little soul is free,
Through Christ thou hast the victory:
Go hence, my child!

DANTE'S VISION.

Now contemplate the Providence divine;
Whence Faith, as viewed on its two several sides,
Shall equally in this fair garden shine.
And know that downward from the lofty throne,
Which in the middle the two parts divides,
No one is there through merit of his own,
But through Another's; and upon conditions;
For all these souls freed from the body were,
Ere upon choice were founded their volitions.
This may you be convinced of (if due pains
You take to mark them, and their accents hear)
Both by their looks, and by their childish strains.
Yet now you doubt, and still your doubts withhold:
But though your bonds are intricate, yet I
Will strive your subtle reasonings to unfold.

Within this peaceful kingdom's wide domain
No room is to be found for casualty,
No dwelling there for hunger, thirst, or pain:
For in this realm is 'stablished every thing
Under the sanction of eternal laws,
As to the finger answereth a ring;
Therefore the children that herein do press
To life eternal, not without a cause
Inherit excellence or more or less.

"OUR WEE WHITE ROSE."

GERALD MASSEY.

ALL in our marriage garden
Grew, smiling up to God,
A bonnier flower than ever
Sucked the green warmth of the sod.
Oh, beautiful unfathomably
Its little life unfurled;
Love's crowning sweetness was our wee
White Rose of all the world.

From out a balmy bosom,
Our bud of beauty grew;
It fed on smiles for sunshine,
And tears for daintier dew.
Aye nestling warm and tenderly,
Our leaves of love were curled
So close and close about our wee
White Rose of all the world.

Two flowers of glorious crimson
Grew with our Rose of light;
Still kept the sweet heaven-grafted slip
Her whiteness saintly white.

I' the wind of life *they* danced with glee,
And reddened as it whirled;
More white and wondrous grew our wee
White Rose of all the world.

With mystical faint fragrance,
Our house of life she filled,—
Revealed each hour some fairy tower,
Where wingèd Hopes might build.
We saw—though none like us might see—
Such precious promise pearled
Upon the petals of our wee
White Rose of all the world.

But evermore the halo
Of Angel-light increased:
Like the mystery of Moonlight,
That folds some fairy feast.
Snow-white, snow-soft, snow-silently,
Our darling bud up-curled,
And dropt i' the Grave—God's lap—our wee
White Rose of all the world.

Our Rose was but in blossom;
Our Life was but in spring;
When down the solemn midnight
We heard the Spirits sing:
"Another bud of infancy,
With holy dews impearled;"
And in their hands they bore our wee
White Rose of all the world.

You scarce could think so small a thing
Could leave a loss so large;
Her little light such shadow fling,
From dawn to sunset's marge.

In other springs our life may be
  In bannered bloom unfurled;
But never, never match our wee
  White Rose of all the world.

. . . . .

Our leaves are shaken from the tree,
    Our hopes laid low,
That after our Spring-nurslings, we
    May long to go.

The warm love-nest our little Doves leave
    With helpless moan,
As they for us at heart would grieve
    In heaven — alone!

The tender Shepherd beckoningly
    Our Lambs doth hold,
That we may take our own when He
    Makes up the fold.

THE DEATH OF THE FIRST-BORN.

ALARIC A. WATTS.

THE late Sir Robert Peel sent the following note to the accomplished author: "It is not from mere courtesy that I assure you that your name is respected by me. I have had the satisfaction of reading many of your poems. I particularly call to mind two, — 'The Death of the First-Born,' and 'My Own Fire-Side;' to have written which would be an honorable distinction to any one."

MY sweet one! my sweet one! the tears were in my eyes
When first I clasped thee to my heart, and heard thy feeble cries;
For I thought of all that I had borne, as I bent me down to kiss
Thy cherry lips, and sunny brow, my first-born bud of bliss!

I turned to many a withered hope, to years of grief and pain,
And the cruel wrongs of a bitter world flashed o'er my boding brain;
I thought of friends, grown worse than cold, of persecuting foes,
And I asked of Heaven if ills like these must mar thy youth's repose!

I gazed upon thy quiet face, half blinded by my tears, —
Till gleams of bliss, unfelt before, came brightening on my fears;
Sweet rays of hope that fairer shone 'mid the clouds of gloom that bound them,
As stars dart down their loveliest light when midnight skies are round them.

My sweet one, my sweet one, thy life's brief hour is o'er,
And a father's anxious fear for thee can fever me no more!
And for the hopes, the sun-bright hopes, that blossomed at thy birth, —
They too have fled, to prove how frail are cherished things of earth!

'Tis true that thou wert young, my child, but though brief thy span below,
To me it was a little age of agony and woe;
For, from thy first faint dawn of life thy cheek began to fade,
And my lips had scarce thy welcome breathed, ere my hopes were wrapt in shade.

Oh! the child in its hours of health and bloom that is dear as thou wert then,
Grows far more prized, more fondly loved, in sickness and in pain;

And thus 'twas thine to prove, dear babe, when every hope was lost,—
Ten times more precious to my soul, for all that thou hadst cost.

Cradled in thy fair mother's arms, we watched thee, day by day,
Pale like the second bow of heaven, as gently waste away:
And, sick with dark foreboding fears we dared not breathe aloud,
Sat, hand in hand, in speechless grief, to wait death's coming cloud!

It came, at length, — o'er thy bright blue eye the film was gathering fast, —
And an awful shade passed o'er thy brow, the deepest and the last;
In thicker gushes strove thy breath, — we raised thy drooping head;
A moment more — the final pang — and thou wert of the Dead!

Thy gentle mother turned away to hide her face from me,
And murmured low of Heaven's behests, and bliss attained by thee;
She would have chid me that I mourned a doom so blest as thine,
Had her own deep grief burst forth in tears as wild as mine!

We laid thee down in thy sinless rest, and from thine infant brow
Culled one soft lock of radiant hair, our only solace now;
Then placed around thy beauteous corpse flowers, not more fair and sweet, —
Twin rose-buds in thy little hands, and jasmine at thy feet.

Though other offspring still be ours, as fair perchance as thou,
With all the beauty of thy cheek, the sunshine of thy brow, —
They never can replace the bud our early fondness nursed;
They may be lovely and beloved, but not, like thee, the First!

THE FIRST! — How many a memory bright that one sweet word can bring,
Of hopes that blossomed, drooped, and died, in life's delightful spring;
Of fervid feelings passed away, — those early seeds of bliss
That germinate in hearts unseared by such a world as this!

My sweet one! my sweet one! my fairest and my First!
When I think of what thou mightst have been, my heart is like to burst;
But gleams of gladness through my gloom their soothing radiance dart,
And my sighs are hushed, my tears are dried, when I turn to what *thou art!*

Pure as the snow-flake ere it falls and takes the stain of earth,
With not a taint of mortal life except thy mortal birth,
God bade thee early taste the spring for which so many thirst,
And bliss, eternal bliss, is thine, my fairest and my FIRST!

THE ANGEL AND THE INFANT.

THEODORE MARTIN, LONDON.

(*From the French of Jean Reboullé, of Nismes.*)

AN angel over a cradle stood;
His visage shone with a radiant gleam;
And he seem'd on his own fair form to brood
In the mirror pure of a crystal stream.

"Oh, come to my home, sweet babe so fair!"
He murmur'd; "Come with me now!
Ah, we shall be happy together there;
The earth is unworthy of such as thou.

"Its gladness is never without alloy;
Some pang from its best delights will rise;
A wail still rings through its shouts of joy,
And all its pleasures are clogg'd with sighs.

"O'er every feast is the fear of doom;
No sky so clear and serene, but may
Be blacken'd and riven with storm and gloom
Before the dawn of another day.

"On that pure brow shall the trouble pass
Of hopes deceived, and of haunting fears?
Shall those blue eyes be bedimm'd, alas!
By the bitter rain of regretful tears?

"No, no! dear babe, through the fields of space
Thou wilt fly with me to a better sphere;
God will not exact, in His boundless grace,
The days that else thou hadst linger'd here.

"No soil of sorrow, no taint of sin,
From thy sojourn here on thy robes shall rest,
The smiles that usher'd thy young life in
Shall follow thee home to yon region blest.

"On thy forehead no cloud shall a shadow fling,
Nor the darkness there of the grave forecast;
Of so unspotted and pure a thing
The loveliest morning is still its last."

And, slowly unfolding his wings snow-white,
The angel ceased, and aloft he fled
To the blest abodes of eternal light.
Alas! poor mother! Thy boy is dead!

THE SICK CHILD'S DREAM.

ROBERT NICOLL.

O MITHER, mither, my head was sair,
And my een wi' tears were weet;
But the pain has gane for evermair,
Sae, mither, dinna greet:
And I ha'e had sic a bonnie dream,
Since last asleep I fell,
O' a' that is holy an' gude to name,
That I've wauken'd my dream to tell.

I thought on the morn o' a simmer day
That awa' through the clouds I flew,
While my silken hair did wavin' play,
'Mang breezes steep'd in dew;
And the happy things o' life and light
Were around my gowden way,
As they stood in their parent Heaven's sight
In the hames o' nightless day.

An' sangs o' love that nae tongue may tell
Frae their hearts cam' flowin' free,
Till the stars stood still, while alang did swell
The plaintive melodie.

And ane o' them sang wi' my mither's voice,
  Till through my heart did gae
That chanted hymn o' my bairnhood's choice
  Sae dowie, saft, an' wae.

Thae happy things o' the glorious sky
  Did lead me far away,
Where the stream o' life rins never dry,
  Where naething kens decay;
And they laid me down in a mossy bed,
  Wi' curtains o' spring leaves green,
And the Name o' God they praying said,
  And a light came o'er my een.

And I saw the earth that I had left,
  And I saw my mither there;
And I saw her grieve that she was bereft
  O' the bairn she thought sae fair;
And I saw her pine till her spirit fled —
  Like a bird to its young one's nest —
To that land of love; and my head was laid
  Again on my mither's breast.

And, mither, ye took me by the hand,
  As ye were wont to do,
And your loof, sae saft and white, I fand
  Laid on my caller brow;
And my lips you kiss'd, and my curling hair
  You round your fingers wreath'd;
And I kent that a happy mither's prayer
  Was o'er me silent breath'd.

And we wander'd through that happy land,
  That was gladly glorious a';
The dwellers there were an angel-band,
  And their voices o' love did fa'

On our ravish'd ears like the deein' tones
O' an anthem far away,
In a starn-lit hour, when the woodland moans
That its green is turn'd to gray.

And, mither, amang the sorrowless there,
We met my brithers three,
And your bonnie May, my sister fair,
And a happy bairn was she;
And she led me awa' 'mang living flowers,
As on earth she aft has done;
And thegither we sat in the holy bowers
Where the blessed rest aboon.

And she tauld me I was in Paradise,
Where God in love doth dwell,
Where the weary rest, and the mourner's voice
Forgets its warld-wail;
And she tauld me they kentna dull nor care;
And bade me be glad to dee,
That yon sinless land and the dwellers there
Might be hame and kin to me.

Then sweetly a voice came on my ears,
And it sounded sae holily,
That my heart grew saft, and blabs o' tears
Sprung up in my sleepin' e'e;
And my inmost soul was sairly moved
Wi' its mair than mortal joy;
'Twas the voice o' Him who bairnies loved
That wauken'd your dreamin' boy!

THE CHILD IN HEAVEN.

MARY HOWITT, LONDON.

We meet around the board, thou art not there;
Over our household joys hath passed a gloom;
Beside the fire we see thy empty chair,
And miss thy sweet voice in the silent room.
What hopeless longings after thee arise!
Even for the touch of thy small hand I pine;
And for the sound of thy dear little feet.
Alas! tears dim mine eyes,
Meeting in every place some joy of thine,
Or when fair children pass me on the street.

Beauty was on thy cheek; and thou didst seem
A privileged being, chartered from decay;
And thy free spirit, like a mountain stream
That hath no ebb, kept on its cheerful way.
Thy laugh was like the inspiring breath of spring,
That thrills the heart, and cannot be unfelt,
The sun, the moon, the green leaves and the flowers,
And every living thing,
Were a strong joy to thee; thy spirit dwelt
Gladly in life, rejoicing in its powers.

Oh! what had death to do with one like thee,
Thou young and loving one, whose soul did cling
Even as the ivy clings unto the tree,
To those that loved thee? Thou, whose tears would spring
Dreading a short day's absence, — didst thou go
Alone into the future world unseen,
Solving each awful untried mystery,
The dread unknown to know;
To be where mortal traveller hath not been,
Whence welcome tidings cannot come from thee?

My happy boy! and murmur I that death
  Over thy young and buoyant frame hath power?
In yon bright land love never perisheth,
  Hope may not mock, nor grief the heart devour.
    The beautiful are round thee; thou dost keep
Within the Eternal presence; and no more
  May'st death or pain or separation dread:
    Thy bright eyes cannot weep,
Nor they with whom thou art thy loss deplore;
  For ye are of the living, not the dead.

Thou dweller with the unseen, who hast explored
  The immense unknown; thou to whom death and heaven
Are mysteries no more; whose soul is stored
  With knowledge for which man hath vainly striven;
    Beloved Child, oh! when shall I lie down
With thee beneath fair trees that cannot fade?
  When from the immortal rivers quench my thirst?
    Life's journey speedeth on;
Yet for a little while we walk in shade;
    Anon by death the cloud is all dispersed,
  Then o'er the hills of heaven the eternal day doth burst.

A CHILD'S GRAVE AT FLORENCE.

ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING.

THIS July creature thought, perhaps,
  Our speech not worth assuming;
She sat upon her parents' laps,
  And mimicked the gnats humming;
Said, "father," "mother,"—then left off,
  For tongues celestial, fitter;
Her hair had grown just long enough
  To catch Heaven's jasper-glitter.

Babes! Love could always hear and see
  Behind the cloud that hid them,
"Let little children come to Me,
  And do not thou forbid them."

. . . . . .

Poor earth, poor heart, — too weak, too weak
  To miss the July shining!
Poor heart! — what bitter words we speak
  When God speaks of resigning!
Sustain this heart in us that faints,
  Thou God the Self-Existent!
We catch up wild at parting saints,
  And feel Thy heaven too distant.
The wind that swept them out of sin,
  Has ruffled all our vesture:
On the shut door that let them in,
  We beat with frantic gesture. —
To us, us also, open straight!
The outer life is chilly;
Are *we*, too, like the earth to wait
  Till next year for our Lily? *
— Oh, my own baby on my knees,
  My leaping, dimpled treasure,
At every word I write like these,
  Clasped close with stronger pressure!
Too well my own heart understands, —
  At every word beats fuller, —
My little feet, my little hands,
  And hair of Lily's color.
But God gives patience, Love learns strength,
  And Faith remembers promise,
And Hope itself can smile at length
  On other hopes gone from us.
Love, strong as Death, shall conquer Death,
Through struggle, made more glorious:

* "Lily," the pet name of the child.

This mother stills her sobbing breath,
  Renouncing yet victorious.
Arms, empty of her child, she lifts
  With spirit unbereaven, —
"God will not take back all His gifts;
  My Lily's mine in heaven.
Still mine! maternal rights serene,
  Not given to another!
The crystal bars shine faint between
  The souls of child and mother.
Meanwhile," the mother cries, "content!
  Our love was well divided:
Its sweetness following where she went,
  Its anguish stayed where I did.
Well done of God, to halve the lot,
  And give her all the sweetness;
To us, the empty room, and cot, —
  To her, the Heaven's completeness.
To us, this grave, — to her, the rows
  The mystic palm-trees spring in;
To us, the silence in the house, —
  To her, the choral singing.
For her, to gladden in God's view, —
  For us, to hope and bear on,
Grow, Lily, in thy garden new
  Beside the Rose of Sharon!
Grow fast in Heaven, sweet Lily clipped,
  In love more calm than this is,
And may the angels, dewy-lipped,
  Remind thee of our kisses!
While none shall tell thee of our tears,
  These human tears now falling,
Till, after a few patient years,
  One home shall take us all in —
Child, father, mother — who left out?
  Not mother, and not father!

And when, our dying couch about,
The natural mists shall gather,—
Some smiling angel close shall stand,
In old Correggio's fashion,
And bear a Lily in his hand,
For death's ANNUNCIATION."

A MESSENGER OF HEAVEN.

MRS. HEMANS.

No bitter tears for thee be shed,
Blossom of being! seen and gone.
With flowers alone we strew thy bed,
O blest departed One!
Whose all of life, a rosy ray,
Blush'd into dawn and pass'd away.

Yes! thou art fled, ere guilt had power
To stain thy cherub soul and form;
Closed is the soft ephemeral flower,
That never felt a storm!
The sunbeam's smile, the zephyr's breath,
All that it knew from birth to death.

Thou wert so like a form of light,
That Heaven benignly call'd thee hence
Ere yet the world could breathe one blight
O'er thy sweet innocence:
And thou, that brighter home to bless,
Art pass'd with all thy loveliness!

Oh! hadst thou still on earth remained,
Vision of beauty! fair, as brief!
How soon thy brightness had been stain'd
With passion or with grief!
Now not a sullying breath can rise
To dim thy glory in the skies.

We rear no marble o'er thy tomb,
No sculptured image there shall mourn;
Ah! fitter far the vernal bloom
Such dwelling to adorn;
Fragrance and flowers and dews must be
The only emblems meet for thee.

Thy grave shall be a blessed shrine,
Adorn'd with nature's brightest wreath;
Each glowing season shall combine
Its incense there to breathe;
And oft upon the midnight air
Shall viewless harps be murmuring there.

THE GARDEN ROSEBUD.

MRS. HARRIET BEECHER STOWE.

(*In Memory of Annie, who died at Milan, June* 6, 1860.)

IN the fair gardens of celestial peace,
Walketh a Gardener in meekness clad;
Fair are the flowers that wreathe His dewy locks,
And His mysterious eyes are sweet and sad.

Fair are the silent foldings of His robes,
Falling with saintly calmness to His feet:
And when He walks, each floweret to His will
With living pulse of sweet accord doth beat.

Every green leaf thrills to its tender heart,
In the mild summer radiance of His eye;
No fear of storm, or cold, or bitter frost,
Shadows the flowerets when their sun is nigh.

And all our pleasant haunts of earthly love
Are nurseries to those gardens of the air;
And His far-darting eye, with starry beam,
Watcheth the growing of His treasures there.

We call them ours, o'erwept with selfish tears,
O'erwatched with restless longings night and day;
Forgetful of the high, mysterious right
HE holds to bear our cherished plants away.

But when some sunny spot in those bright fields
Needs the fair presence of an added flower,
Down sweeps a starry angel in the night;
At morn the rose has vanished from our bower.

Where stood our tree, our flower, there is a grave!
Blank, silent, vacant, but in worlds above;
Like a new star outblossom'd in the skies,
The angels hail an added flower of love.

Dear friend, no more upon that lonely mound,
Strewed with the red and yellow autumn leaf,
Drop thou the tear, but raise the fainting eye
Beyond the autumn mists of earthly grief.

Thy garden rosebud bore within its breast
Those mysteries of color, warm and bright,
That the bleak climate of this lower sphere
Could never waken into form and light.

Yes, the sweet Gardener has borne her hence,
Nor must thou ask to take her thence away;
Thou shalt behold her in some coming hour,
Full-blossom'd in His fields of cloudless day!

"O LITTLE CHILD!"

J. STANYAN BIGG, ULVERSTON.

NOT always are we in the weary mart;
Not always are we plodding in the streets.
We, in our rural home, when the gray dusk
Falls upon copse and meadow, saunter out,
And do not talk, but think of thee, O child!
And in the night, when heavy hearts are hushed,
In the deep night we hear the beating rain,
And in the beating rain the wailing wind,
And in the wailing wind a cry, a low,
Soft cry, not as of agony, but bliss, —
A silvery cry, as though we heard a thrill
Of spirit-music, far beyond the rain,
Beyond the wailings of the wind, beyond
The storms and gloomy reaches of the night, —
Out of the golden spaces far beyond:
And then we dream. We do but dream, O child!
O little child! that camest, and art gone,
That wert our child, and art our child no more.
We dream thou hast not yet forgotten us,
But yearnest from thy starry home, as we
Yearn towards the heavens for thee. We do but dream,
And in our dreamings are not quite forlorn.

Thy room is here, sweet babe! We enter it,
The room, but oh! the child. Thy little bed
Is white in moonlight; — oh! for the beauteous form.
Thy toys are trembling in our palms; — but oh!
The tiny, dimpled hands that fingered them.
The stairs are here; — but oh! the little feet!
Gone! Gone for ever! Yet we hope to reach
The heaven that holds thee; and with humble hearts,
Thank God for thee, O child! We know that thou
Art seeing now, and not as in a dream,

The things we long for, and shall never see
Until we join thee in the after-world; —
Thee, little child! who camest, and art gone,
Who wert *our* child, and art our child no more,
Being familiar with the floor of heaven,
And dwelling nigh unto the throne of God!

THE DYING MOTHER AND HER CHILD.

ROBERT POLLOK, A.M.

OUR sighs were numerous, and profuse our tears;
For she we lost was lovely, and we loved
Her much. Fresh in our memory, as fresh
As yesterday, is yet the day she died.
It was an April day; and blithely all
The youth of Nature leaped beneath the sun,
And promised glorious manhood; and our hearts
Were glad, and round them danced the lightsome blood,
In healthy merriment, when tidings came
A child was born; and tidings came again
That she who gave it birth was sick to death.
So swift trod sorrow on the heels of joy!
We gathered round her bed, and bent our knees
In fervent supplication to the Throne
Of Mercy, and perfumed our prayers with sighs
Sincere, and penitential tears, and looks
Of self-abasement; but we sought to stay
An angel on the earth, a spirit ripe
For heaven; and Mercy, in her love, refused:
Most merciful, as oft, when seeming least!
Most gracious when she seemed the most to frown!
The room I well remember, and the bed
On which she lay, and all the faces, too,
That crowded dark and mournfully around.

Her father there, and mother, bending, stood;
And down their aged cheeks fell many drops
Of bitterness. Her husband, too, was there,
And brothers, and they wept; her sisters, too,
Did weep and sorrow, comfortless; and I
Too wept, though not to weeping given: and all
Within the house was dolorous and sad.
This I remember well; but better still
I do remember, and will ne'er forget,
The dying eye! That eye alone was bright,
And brighter grew as nearer death approached:
As I have seen the gentle little flower
Look fairest in the silver beam which fell
Reflected from the thunder-cloud, that soon
Came down, and o'er the desert scattered far
And wide its loveliness. She made a sign
To bring her babe: 'twas brought, and by her placed.
She looked upon its face, that neither smiled
Nor wept, nor knew who gazed upon 't; and laid
Her hand upon its little breast, and sought
For it, with look that seem'd to penetrate
The heavens, unutterable blessings, such
As God to dying parents only granted,
For infants left behind them in the world.
"God keep my child!" we heard her say, and heard
No more. The Angel of the Covenant
Was come, and, faithful to His promise, stood
Prepared to walk with her through death's dark vale.
And now her eyes grew bright, and brighter still,
Too bright for ours to look upon, suffused
With many tears, and closed without a cloud.
They set, as sets the morning star, which goes
Not down behind the darkened west, nor hides
Obscured among the tempests of the sky,
But melts away into the light of heaven.

JESUS IN THE STORM.

REV. DR. ALEX. WALLACE, GLASGOW.

SAD, sad thoughts and weary
Had preyed upon my mind;
A darkness deep and dreary
Had made me sick and blind.

But now upon the ocean
Of troubled thoughts I see
My Saviour's graceful motion:
He cometh unto me.

The winds and waves He stilleth,
And all is calm again;
My soul with life He filleth,
Like sunshine after rain.

The eye of faith is beaming
With joy sent from above;
The rainbow cloud is streaming,
The pledge of constant love.

My loosened tongue adoreth
The greatness of His might;
His smile alone restoreth
The darken'd soul to light.

"THE DEW-DROPS GONE."

JOHN CRITCHLEY PRINCE, LANCASHIRE.

"OH, dearest mother! tell me, pray,
Why are the dew-drops gone so soon?
Could they not stay till close of day
To sparkle on the flowery spray,
Or on the fields till noon?"

The mother gazed upon her boy,
  Earnest with thought beyond his years,
And felt a sharp and sad annoy,
That meddled with her deepest joy;
  But she restrained her tears.

"My child, 'tis said such beauteous things,
  Too often loved with vain excess,
Are swept away by angel wings,
Before contamination clings
  To their frail loveliness.

Behold yon rainbow, brightening yet!
  To which all mingled hues are given;
There are thy dew-drops, grandly set
In a resplendent coronet
  Upon the brow of heaven.

No stain of earth can reach them there,
  Woven with sunbeams there they shine,
A transient vision of the air,
But yet a symbol, pure and fair,
  Of love and peace divine."

The boy gazed upward into space,
  With eager and inquiring eyes,
Whilst o'er his sweet and thoughtful face
Came a faint glory, and a grace
  Transmitted from the skies.

Ere the last odorous sigh of May,
  That child lay down beneath the sod!
Like dew his young soul passed away,
To mingle with the brighter day
  That veils the throne of God.

Mother! thy fond, foreboding heart
  Truly foretold thy loss and pain;
But thou didst choose the patient part
Of resignation to the smart,
  And owned thy loss his gain.

THE ROSEBUDS.

REV. WILLIAM M. TAYLOR, A.M., LIVERPOOL.

A ROSE-TREE by my house-side I did plant,
And in its growing I took great delight;
I nailed its branches to the wall, and watched
Them spread, until they wreathed my window round
With leafy beauty. Every time I looked
Abroad, its verdure feasted my glad eyes;
And when, returning from my vineyard work
At night, I sought my home, I lingered still
Upon the threshold, that once more I might,
Before I slept, behold its loveliness
Each little spray I knew, its very leaves
I numbered, and with rapture saw at length,
One morning, 'mid the sparkling drops of dew,
Its virgin buds peep out, their conic forms
All fringed with mossy softness, and the white
Beneath half covered, half revealed. I clapped
My hands for joy, and called my friends and showed
My new discovered riches. Nine there were,
All lovely, and I said, with heart sincere, —
"As each one ripens to its fragrance full,
I'll give it to my Lord;" for this had been
My purpose from the planting of the tree;
And this it was that made my joy so rich.
I left my home that morning as my wont,
Only my heart was blither than sometimes,
And, at my work, I thought full oft about
My rosebuds, wondering much what like they'd be
At my return, and almost wishing that
The day were done, that I might see them still
Again. The evening came, I hastened home,
And looked; and lo! there were no more than seven!
Some hand had plucked the other two, and left
The stem on which they grew a broken thing.

I sighed, and cried, and wept, and like to her,
Whose bitter wail of old made Ramah sad,
I would not be consoled. Long time I stood
And gazed in blank perplexity. I could
Not speak for tears; but when I turned I saw
My Lord himself, with my twain buds upon
His breast. "I gathered them," He said, and that
Was all; but yet it was enough to soothe
My wounded spirit; so I calmly said,—
"For Thee, dear Lord, I meant them from the first;
I thought, indeed, to keep them till full blown,
And then present them at their best to Thee,
Not deeming that Thou caredst for them thus.
But, as Thou wilt, Thy best is best, and if
I erred in my poor thoughts, forgive, nor chide
My tears. That which I had designed for them
At last, is given me, only sooner than
I first had planned. But my great end is gained,
And since Thou wear'st them on Thy breast, 'It's well!'"

PARENTAL CONSOLATION.

Rev. John Guthrie, M.A., Glasgow.

When troubles like a tempest sweep,
  And tides of fierce temptation roll,
As deep, remorseless, calls to deep,
  Around my whelmed and sinking soul;
Lo! He is near, my Saviour dear,
  Who trode affliction's path;
Who walked the wave, despoiled the grave,
  And plucked the sting from death.

If in bereavement's bitter cup
  Some dregs continue to the end,
As memory wakes the image up
  Of parent, brother, sister, friend;

My Lord who wept o'er him that slept,
And soothed the sisters twain,
From heaven on high, with tender eye,
Still marks the mourner's pain.

When weeping o'er my children's grave,
As if to rescue from its gloom
The golden hopes that childhood gave,
Now quenched and buried in their tomb;
Thou fondling arm, thou bosom warm,
Where babes of old were pressed,
I joy to see my lambs with Thee,
Safe folded on Thy breast!

If infants none in heaven were found,
To glad its golden street,
But only star-bright victors crowned,
Then heaven were incomplete.
Such stars may gem Christ's diadem,
Yet infants too have place;
These flowerets young are garlands strung,
Sweet trophies of His grace.

RESIGNED IN HOPE.

WILLIAM T. M'AUSLANE, GLASGOW.

OUR little boy is gone!
His gladsome voice, whose music lately filled
Our homes and hearts, is now for ever stilled!
How changed his looks! Closed are his bright eyes now;
Pale is his cheek, as marble cold his brow;
Those limbs, before so active, are at rest,
The spring is broken, motionless the breast,
Life, light, and joy are flown!

Oh, earthly hopes, how vain!
Frail is the fabric, fair though it appear,
Which on uncertain human life we rear;
Before some sudden storm it yields away,
A ruin lies, and sinks into decay.
So have our hopes of what, in future days,
Our boy might prove, crumbled before our gaze,
Ne'er to revive again!

But why should we repine?
Our darling child was only ours in loan,
God, when he lent him, lent what was His own.
And shall we feel displeased He now should come
To claim and take him to the Heavenly Home?
Oh, rather let us, though 'tis sad to part,
Yield up the loved one, and, with thankful heart,
Bow to the will Divine!

Then let our tearful eyes
Turn from the little tenement of clay
From which the ransom'd soul has passed away;
Let us behold, by faith, that land so fair,
Now dearer to us that our boy is there.
And may we seek to join him on that shore
Where, when we meet, we meet to part no more,
But dwell beyond the skies.

TO A BEREAVED MOTHER.

REV. HENRY BATCHELOR, GLASGOW.

THE life ethereal, sublime,
Wastes not beneath the senseless clod.
The folded bud has changed its clime,
And opens in the light of God;
The soul its mortal chrysalis has riven,
And spreads its wings a seraph bright in heaven.

THE CONTRAST.

REV. A. WALLACE, D.D., GLASGOW.

WEEP not for me: the smoking flax
Shall flame in heaven a radiant star;
The bruised reed shall stronger wax,
In grace and strength surpassing far
The cedar on the mountain's brow, —
No withered, wavering weakling now,
But fairest workmanship of love,
A pillar in the courts above.

"THE ANGELS SINGING."

JAMES D. BURNS, M.A., LONDON.

I HEARD the angels singing
As they went up through the sky,
A sweet infant's spirit bringing
To its Father's house on high:
"Happy thou, so soon ascended,
With thy shining raiment on!
Happy thou, whose race is ended
With a crown so quickly won!

Hushed is now thy lamentation,
And the first words to thee given
Will be words of adoration
In the blessèd speech of Heaven;
For the blood thou mightst have slighted
Hath now made thee pure within,
And the evil seed is blighted
That had ripened unto sin.

"We will lead thee by a river,
Where the flowers are blooming fair;
We will sing to thee for ever,
For no night may darken there.
Thou shalt walk in robes of glory;
Thou shalt wear a golden crown;
Thou shalt sing Redemption's story,
With the saints around the throne.

"Thou shalt see that better country,
Where a tear-drop never fell,—
Where a foe made never entry,
And a friend ne'er said farewell
Where, upon the radiant faces
That will shine on thee alway,
Thou shalt never see the traces
Of estrangement or decay.

"Thee we bear, a lily-blossom
To a sunnier clime above;
There to lay thee in a bosom
Warm with more than mother's love.
Happy thou, so timely gathered
From a region cold and bare,
To bloom on, a flower unwither'd,
Through an endless summer there!"

NOT DEAD, BUT CHANGED.

WILLIAM FREELAND, GLASGOW.

LATE living, and now dead! O beauteous boy,
So early dead, who wast so late a joy!
Ah, me! how still and strange
Is this God's dream of change!
Transfigured in the light of death,
Thou seemest breathing without breath!

How shall we fill our hearts with other glee,
Who loved, of all the world, but thee — but thee!
Can ever we behold
So sweet a bud unfold?
O pale cold snowdrop of our married spring,
How deep God pierces with so slight a thing!

So slight a thing! Man's pyramids shall yield
Their high borne heads unto the humblest field:
Each ancient star and sun
Shall crumble one by one:
But thou, who keep'st with death such early tryste,
Shalt bloom eternal in the realms of Christ!

THE LAMBS ALL SAFELY FOLDED.

I LOVED them so,
That when the Elder Shepherd of the fold
Came, covered with the storm, and pale and cold,
And begged for one of my sweet lambs to hold,
I bade Him go.

He claimed the pet;
A little fondling thing, that to my breast
Clung always, either in quiet or unrest;
I thought of all my lambs I loved him best,
And yet — and yet —

I laid him down,
In those white shrouded arms, with bitter tears;
For some voice told me that, in after years,
He should know nought of passion, grief, or fears,
As I had known.

And yet again
That Elder Shepherd came; my heart grew faint:
He claim'd another lamb, with sadder plaint.
Another! She, who, gentle as a saint,
Ne'er gave me pain.

Aghast I turned away;
There sat she, lovely as an angel's dream,
Her golden locks with sunlight all agleam,
Her holy eyes with heaven in their beam;
I knelt to pray:

"Is it Thy will?
My Father! say, must this pet lamb be given?
Oh, Thou hast many such, dear Lord, in heaven!"
And a soft voice said, "Nobly hast thou striven;
But — peace, be still!"

Oh, how I wept
And clasped her to my bosom, with a wild
And yearning love, — my lamb, my pleasant child!
Her, too, I gave: the little angel smiled,
And *slept!*

"Go! go!" I cried:
For, once again, that Shepherd laid His hand
Upon the noblest of our household band:
Like a pale spectre, there He took His stand,
Close to his side.

And yet how wondrous sweet
The look with which He heard my passionate cry:
"Touch not my lamb — for him, oh, let me die!"
"A little while," he said, with smile and sigh,
"Again to meet."

Hopeless I fell;
And when I rose, the light had burned so low,
So faint, I could not see my darling go.
He had not bidden me farewell; but, ah!
I *felt* farewell —

More deeply far
Than if my arms had compass'd that slight frame;
Though could I but have heard him breathe my name,
"Dear mother!" but in heaven 'twill be the same;
There burns my star!

He will not take
Another lamb, I thought; for only one
Of the dear fold is spared to be my sun,
My guide, my mourner when this life is done;
My heart would break.

Oh, with what thrill
I heard Him enter; but I did not know
(For it was dark) that he had robbed me so;
The idol of my soul, — *he* could not go!
Oh, heart be still!

Came morning: can I tell
How this poor frame its sorrowful tenant kept?
For waking tears were mine; I, sleeping, wept,
And days, months, years, that weary vigil kept.
Alas, "Farewell!"

How often it is said!
I sit and think, and wonder, too, sometime,
How it will seem, when, in that happier clime,
It never will ring out like funeral chime
Over the dead.

No tears! no tears!
Will there a day come that I shall not weep?
For I bedew my pillow in my sleep.
Yes, yes, thank God, no grief that clime shall keep!
No weary years.

Ay, "It is well!"
Well with my lambs, and with their earthly guide:
There, pleasant rivers wander they beside,
Or strike sweet harps upon its silver tide!
Ay, "It is well!"

Through the dreary day
They often come from glorious light to me;
I cannot feel their touch, their faces see,
Yet, my soul whispers, they do come to me;
Heaven is not far away!

THE DAY DAWN.

REV. RICHARD CECIL.

[The following lines were written by the revered Author, on the death of his infant, who departed at *day*-break.]

CEASE here longer to detain me,
Fondest mother, drowned in woe;
Now thy kind caresses pain me:
Morn advances, let me go.

See yon orient streak appearing,
Harbinger of endless day:
Hark, a voice the darkness cheering,
Calls my new-born soul away.

Lately launched, a trembling stranger,
On the world's wild, boisterous flood,
Pierced with sorrows, tossed with danger,
Gladly I return to God.

Now my cries shall cease to grieve thee,
Now my trembling heart finds rest;
Kinder arms than thine receive me,
Softer pillow than thy breast.

Weep not o'er those eyes that languish,
Upward turning to their home;
Raptured, they'll forget all anguish,
While they wait to see thee come.

There, my mother, pleasures centre;
Weeping, parting, care, or woe
Ne'er our Father's house shall enter:
Morn advances, let me go!

As through this calm, this holy dawning,
Silent glides my parting breath,
To an everlasting morning,
Gently close my eyes in death.

Blessings endless, richest blessings,
Pour their streams upon thine heart,
(Though no language yet possessing)
Breathes my spirit ere we part.

Yet to leave thee sorrowing rends me,
Though again His voice I hear:
Rise! may every grace attend thee;
Rise, and seek to meet me there!

"THE THREE SONS."

JOHN MOULTRIE.

. . . . . .

I HAVE a son, a third sweet son; his age I cannot tell,
For they reckon not by years and months where he is gone to dwell.
To us, for fourteen anxious months, his infant smiles were given,
And then he bade farewell to earth, and went to live in Heaven.

I cannot tell what form his is, what looks he weareth now,
Nor guess how bright a glory crowns his shining seraph brow.
The thoughts which fill his *sinless* soul, the bliss which he doth feel,
Are numbered with the secret things which God will not reveal.

But I know (for God hath told me this) that he is now at rest,
Where other blessed infants be, on their Saviour's loving breast.
I know his spirit feels no more this weary load of flesh,
But his sleep is blessed with endless dreams of joys for ever fresh.

I know the angels fold him close beneath their glittering wings,
And soothe him with a song that breathes of Heaven's divinest things.
I know that we shall meet our babe (his mother dear and I),
Where God for aye shall wipe away all tears from every eye.

Whate'er befalls his brethren twain, *his* bliss can never cease;
Their lot may here be grief and fear, but *his* is certain peace.
It may be that the tempter's wiles their souls from bliss may sever;
But, if our own poor faith fail not, *he* must be ours for ever.

When we think of what our darling is, and what we still must be;
When we muse on that world's perfect bliss, and this world's misery;
When we groan beneath this load of sin, and feel this grief and pain,—
Oh! we'd rather lose our other two, than have him here again.

"HE IS NOT THERE."

JOHN PIERPONT.

I CANNOT make him dead!
His fair sunshiny head
Is ever bounding round my study-chair;
Yet, when my eyes, now dim
With tears, I turn to him,
The vision vanishes — he is not there!

I walk my parlor floor,
And, through the open door,
I hear a footfall on the chamber stair;
I'm stepping toward the hall
To give the boy a call;
And then bethink me that — he is not there!

I thread the crowded street,
A satchell'd lad I meet,
With the same beaming eyes and colored hair;
And as he's running by,
Follow him with my eye,
Scarcely believing that — he is not there.

I know his face is hid
Under the coffin lid;
Closed are his eyes; cold is his forehead fair;
My hand that marble felt;
O'er it in prayer I knelt;
Yet my heart whispers that — he is not there.

I cannot *make* him dead!
When passing by the bed,
So long watched over with parental care,
My spirit and my eye
Seek it inquiringly,
Before the thought comes that — he is not there!

When at the cool, gray break
Of day, from sleep I wake,
With my first breathing of the morning air,
My soul goes up, with joy,
To Him who gave my boy,
Then comes the sad thought that — he is not there!

When at the day's calm close,
Before we seek repose,
I'm, with his mother, offering up our prayer,
Or evening anthems tuning,
In spirit I'm communing
With our boy's spirit, though — he is not there!

Not there! — Where, then, is he?
The form I used to see
Was but the raiment that he used to wear:

The grave, that now doth press
Upon that cast-off dress,
Is but his wardrobe locked; — *he* is not there!

He lives! — In all the past
He lives; nor, to the last,
Of seeing him again will I despair.
In dreams I see him now;
And, on his angel brow,
I see it written, "Thou shalt see me *there!*"

Yes, we all live to God!
Father! Thy chastening rod
So help us, Thine afflicted ones, to bear,
That, in the spirit-land,
Meeting at Thy right hand,
'Twill be our heaven to find that — Thou art *there!*

THE GOOD SHEPHERD AND THE LAMB.

MEINHOLD.

GENTLE Shepherd, Thou hast still'd
Now Thy little lamb's long weeping;
Ah, how peaceful, pale, and mild,
In its narrow bed 'tis sleeping!
And no sigh of anguish sore
Heaves that little bosom more.

In this world of care and pain,
Lord, Thou wouldst no longer leave it;
To the sunny heavenly plain,
Dost Thou now with joy receive it,
Clothed in robes of spotless white,
Now it dwells with Thee in light.

Ah, Lord Jesus! grant that we
Where it lives may soon be living;
And the lovely pastures see
That its heavenly food are giving;
Then the gain of death we prove,
Though Thou take what most we love.

"THE EVENING STAR."

(FROM THE "CHRISTIAN TREASURY.")

SHE was "the evening star" I thought would shine
Upon my path, as I, with years decline,
Thought I should watch its lustre softer glow,
Cheering my weary pilgrimage below;
But God has set my bright and gentle star
In heaven afar.

She was my flower: the sad pathway of life,
So full, to sinful man, of care and strife,
Was by her presence stripped of many a thorn,
Making my trials easier to be borne.
My flower is now in realms of holy light,
In glory bright.

Yes, she is there; for, while on earth in pain,
She loved supremely her Redeemer's name;
Now she is with Him, near His throne she stands,
Rests in His arms, one of His folded lambs.
Soon shall we meet before that glorious throne,
My little one.

Yes, there's my child; I see, with eye of faith,
Her happy spirit free from sin and death;
She is a jewel on her Saviour's brow;
Low at His feet her crown she loves to throw;
While He, enthroned in love and mercy mild,
Smiles on my child.

Shall I then grieve my precious one is where
She doth the golden crown and white robe wear?
No; rather would I joy that she is free,
And wait my Father's summons patiently,
To join with her the heavenly blessed throng,
In glorious song.

GONE TO PARADISE.

CHARLES WESLEY.

WHEREFORE should I make my moan,
Now the darling child is dead?
He to rest is early gone,
He to Paradise is fled!
I shall go to him, but he
Never shall return to me.

God forbids his longer stay,
God recalls the precious loan!
He hath taken him away,
From my bosom to His own.
Surely what He wills is best;
Happy in His will I rest.

Faith cries out, "It is the Lord!
Let Him do what seems Him good:
Be Thy holy name adored,
Take the gift awhile bestowed;
Take the child, no longer mine;
Thine he is, for ever Thine!"

THE HIGHEST RANK IN HEAVEN.

RALPH ERSKINE.

IN heavenly choirs a question rose,
That stirred up strife will never close;
"What rank of all the ransomed race
Owes highest praise to Sovereign grace?"
Babes thither caught from womb and breast
Claimed right to sing above the rest;
Because they found the happy shore
They never saw nor sought before.

EPITAPHS ON INFANTS.

ROBERT ROBINSON.

BOLD infidelity, turn pale and die!
Beneath this stone four infants' ashes lie;
Say, are they lost or saved?
If death's by sin, they sinned, for they lie here:
If heaven's by works, in heaven they can't appear.
Reason, ah, how depraved!
Revere the Bible's sacred page, the knot's untied;
They died, for Adam sinned: they live, for Jesus died!

WM. COWPER.

BEWAIL not much, my parents! me, the prey
Of ruthless Hades, and sepulchred here.
An infant, in my fifth scarce finish'd year,
He found all sportive, innocent, and gay,
Your young Callimachus; and if I knew
Not many joys, my griefs were also few.

THOMAS AIRD.

THE glistening infant dies in its first laugh,
Like flower whose fragrance is its epitaph.

Peace to my Judith in the grave! she died in her young days,
God took her to Himself, and I blessed the Almighty's ways.

MRS. HEMANS.

THOU, that canst gaze upon thine own fair boy,
And hear his prayer's low murmur at thy knee,
And o'er his slumber bend in breathless joy,
Come to this tomb! it hath a voice for thee!
Pray! Thou art blest, — ask strength for sorrow's hour.
Love, deep as thine, lays low its broken flower.

HARTLEY COLERIDGE.

YET, sure the babe is in the cradle blest,
Since God Himself a baby deign'd to be;
And slept upon a mortal mother's breast,
And steep'd in baby tears, — His Deity.

HARTLEY COLERIDGE.

OH, sleep, sweet infant, for we all must sleep,
And wake like babes, that we may wake with Him
Who watches still His own from harm to keep,
And o'er them spreads the wings of cherubim.

PROFESSOR JOHN WILSON.

No fears have we when some delightful child
Falls from its innocence into the grave;
Soon as we know its little breath is gone,
We see it lying on the Saviour's breast
A heavenly flower, there fed with heavenly dew.

R. B. SHERIDAN.

IN some rude spot where vulgar herbage grows,
If chance a violet rear its purple head,
The careful gardener moves it ere it blows,
To thrive and flourish in a nobler bed;
Such was thy fate, dear child,
Thy opening such!
Pre-eminence in early bloom was shown;
For earth, too good, perhaps;
And lov'd too much,—
Heaven saw, and early mark'd thee for its own.

THE cup of life just to her lips she press'd,
Found the taste bitter, and declined the rest;
Then looking upward to the realms of day,
She gently sighed her little soul away.

JAMES CAWTHORN (1719).

THESE happy infants, early taught to shun
All that the world admires beneath the sun,
Scorn'd the weak bands mortality could tie,
And fled impatient to their native sky.

Dear, precious babes! alas! when fond.y wild,
A mother's heart hung melting o'er her child;
When my charm'd eye a flood of joy express'd,
And all the father kindled in my breast,
A sudden paleness seized each guiltless face,
And Death, though smiling, crept o'er every grace.

Nature, be calm; heave not the impassion'd sigh
Nor teach one tear to tremble in mine eye;
A few unspotted moments pass'd between
Their dawn of being and their closing scene;
And sure no nobler blessing can be given,
When one short anguish is the price of heaven.

FRANCIS DAVISON (1635).

WIT's perfection, Beauty's wonder,
Nature's pride, the Graces' treasure,
Virtue's life, his friends' sole pleasure,
This cold marble-stone lies under,
Which is often moist with tears
For such loss in such young years.

Lovely boy, thou art not dead,
But from earth to heaven fled;
For base earth was far unfit
For such beauty, grace, and wit.

Thou, alive on earth, sweet boy,
Hadst an angel's wit and face;
And now dead, thou dost enjoy
In high heaven an angel's place.

SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE.

ERE Sin could blight or Sorrow fade,
Death came with friendly care,
The opening bud to heaven conveyed,
And bade it blossom there.

Its balmy lips the infant blest,
Relaxing from its mother's breast,
How sweet it heaves the happy sigh
Of innocent satiety!

And such my infant's latest sigh!
Oh, tell, rude stone, the passer by
That here the pretty babe doth lie
Death sang to sleep with lullaby.

SAMUEL WESLEY (1692).

BENEATH, a sleeping infant lies,
To earth whose ashes lent,
More glorious shall hereafter rise,
Though not more innocent.

When the archangel's trump shall blow,
And souls and bodies join,
What crowds will wish their lives below
Had been as short as thine!

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